
PARENTAL ADVISORY
EXPLICIT CONTENT
Vagabond
Takehiko Inoue
Based on Eiji Yoshikawa's *Musashi*
1
Three in One

Vagabond

VIZBIG Edition
Volume 7

Volume 1

Chapter 1 Shinmen Takezō • Chapter 2 Akemi • Chapter 3 Okō • Chapter 4 The Brigand Tsujikaze • Chapter 5 Blood Game • Chapter 6 The Troubles of Hon'iden Matahachi at Seventeen • Chapter 7 Farewell Takezō • Chapter 8 Miyamoto Village • Chapter 9 Fiancée • Chapter 10 Left Behind

Vagabond

Volume 2

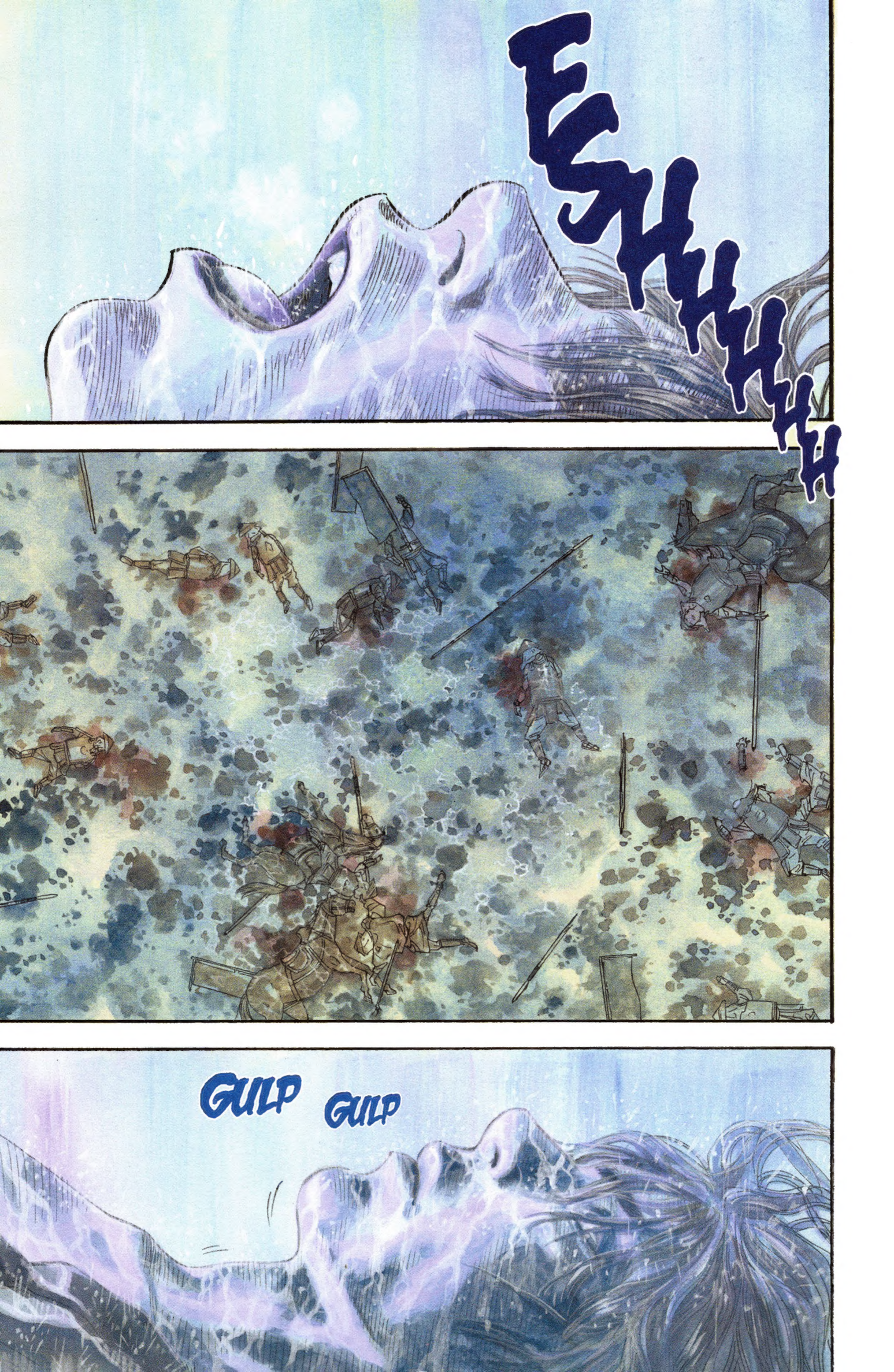
Chapter 11 Demon • Chapter 12 Takuan • Chapter 13 Life • Chapter 14 Cut Down • Chapter 15 No Fear • Chapter 16 Captured • Chapter 17 Invincible Under the Sun • Chapter 18 Tree of Shame • Chapter 19 The Demon's Child • Chapter 20 Death • Chapter 21 A Place in the Sun

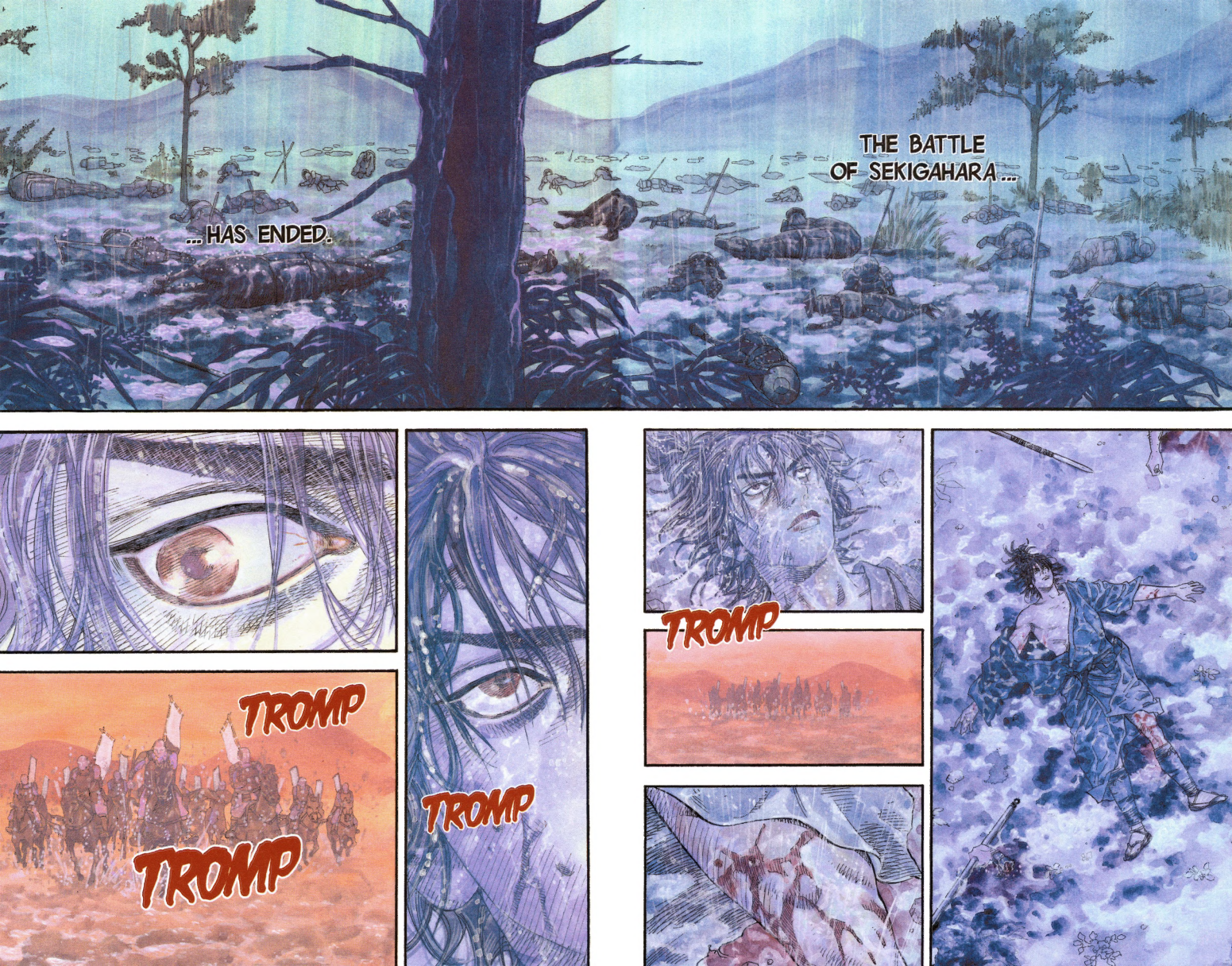
VIZBIG Edition
Volume 1

Volume 3

Chapter 22 Miyamoto Musashi • Chapter 23 First Step • Chapter 24 The Challenge • Chapter 25 Chaos at the Yoshioka School • Chapter 26 The Master • Chapter 27 Instinct • Chapter 28 Demon II • Chapter 29 Ignorance • Chapter 30 A Single Stroke • Chapter 31 Inferno

Takehiko Inoue
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ESHHHHH
GULP GULP


THE BATTLE OF SEKIGAHARA...
...HAS ENDED.
TROMP
TROMP
TROMP
TROMP

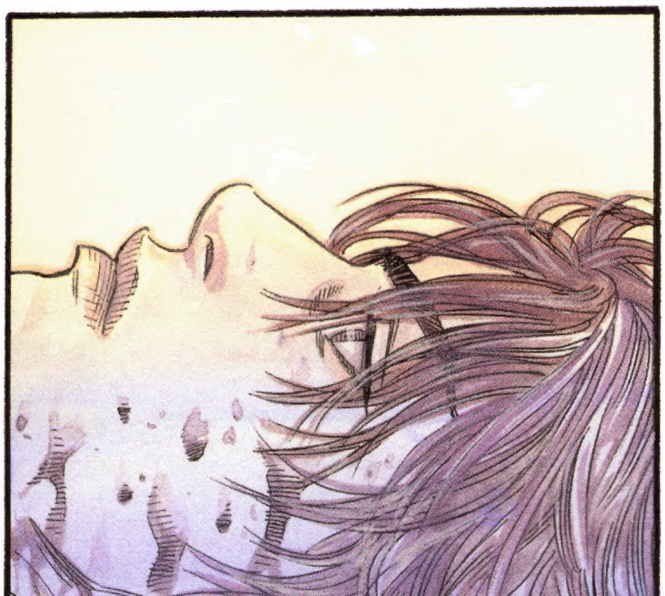

I'M A FAILURE.
Vagabond
vol. 1
#1 Shinmen Takezō

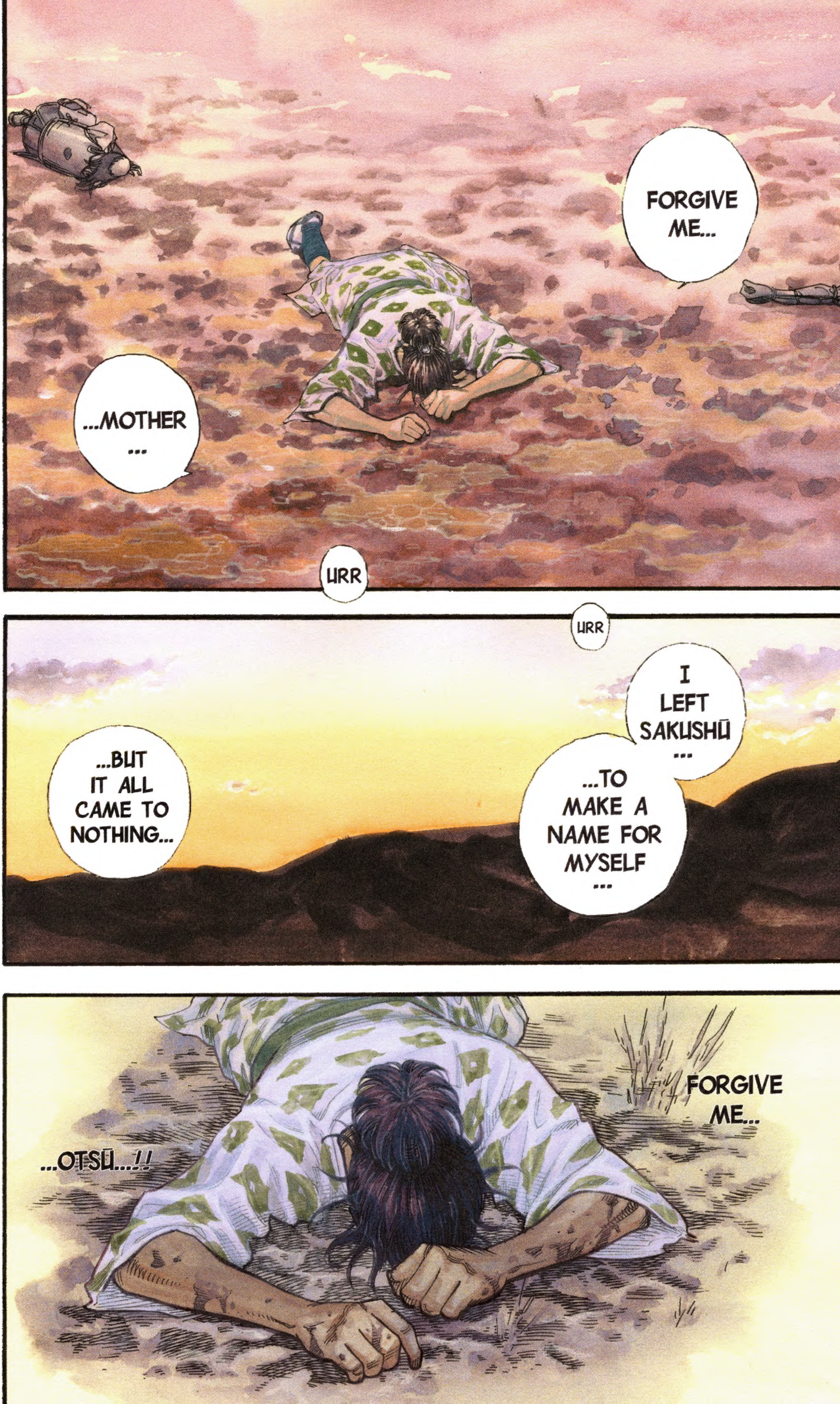

TRUMP
TRUMP
TRUMP
TRUMP



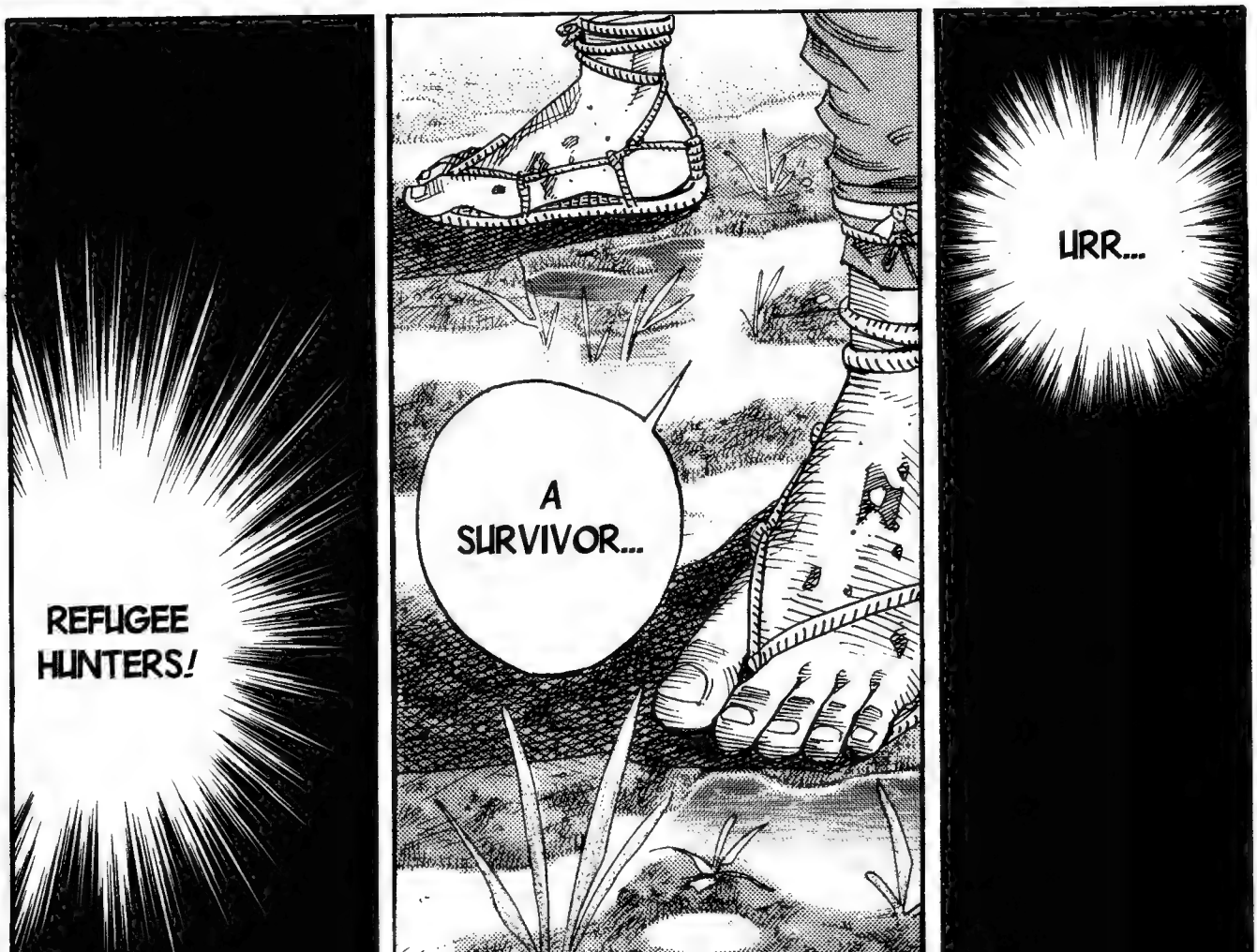

UR...
...


UR...
UR...




FORGIVE ME...
...MOTHER ...
URR
URR
I LEFT SAKUSHŪ ...
...TO MAKE A NAME FOR MYSELF ...
...BUT IT ALL CAME TO NOTHING...
FORGIVE ME...
...OTSŪ...!!

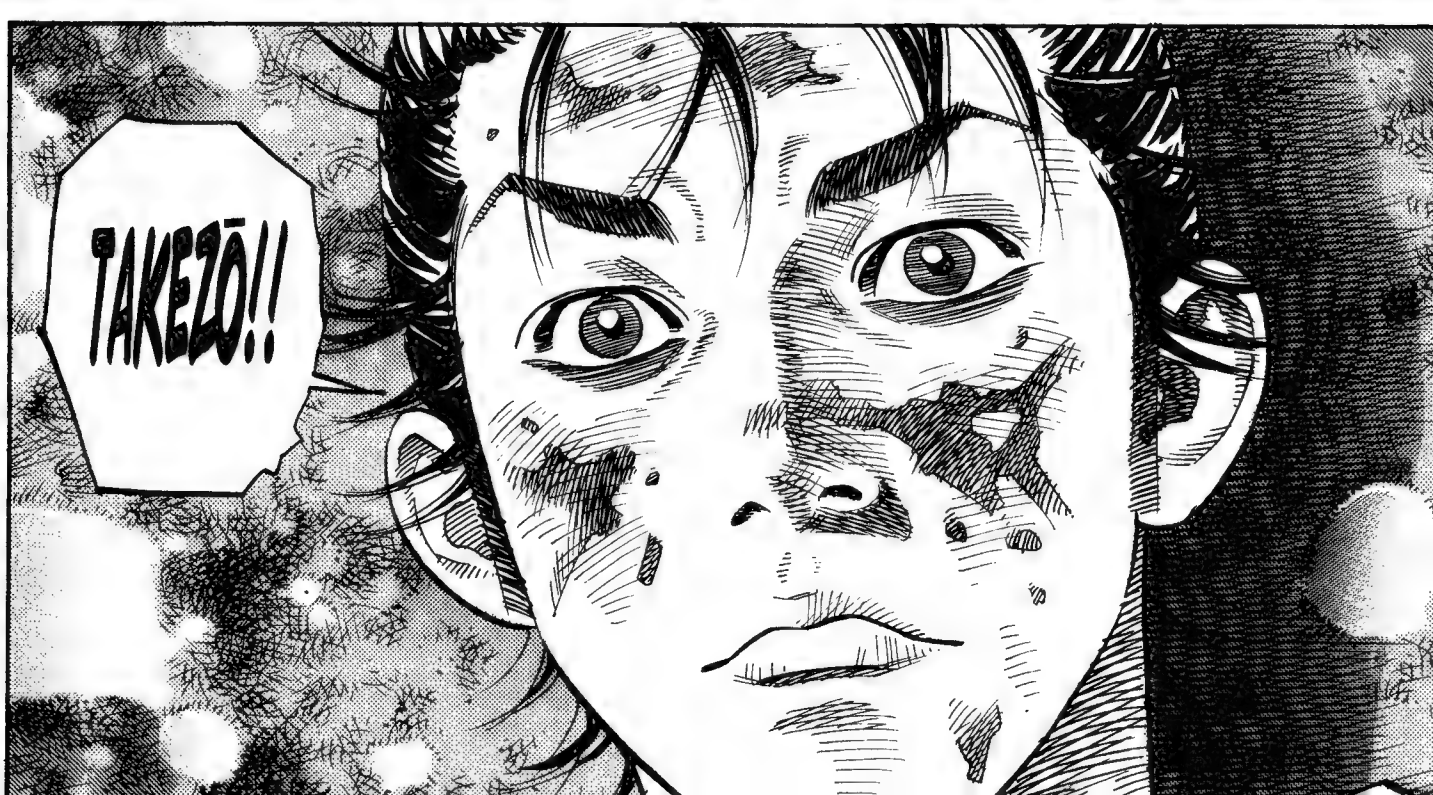

!!
FWOK


REFUGEE HUNTERS!
A SURVIVOR...
URR...


I SURVIVED, TOO...


MATAHACHI.


FWP


TAKEZŌ!!


SOBB
YOU DID THAT ON PURPOSE!
SOB
SNIF
SOB
CAN YOU WALK?
TO SCARE ME!
LET'S GET GOING.


HUF
HUF
TAKEZŌ.
JUST LEAVE ME HERE.
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HAK
I'M FINISHED.

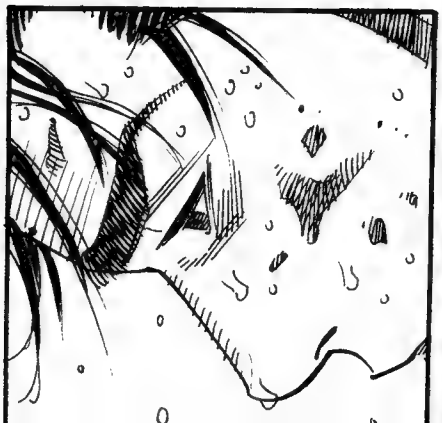

HUF
HUF
I CAN'T WALK ANY-MORE.
HUF


ALL WE'VE HAD TO EAT IS GRASS.
THESE PAST FEW DAYS...
HUF
HUF
SHUFF
SHUFF


HUF
HUF
HUF
TAKEZŌ ...


ONCE WE FIND A VIL-LAGE WE'LL GET SOME MEDICINE.
IT WON'T BE LONG.
TUGG






PLOP
DRIBBLE DRIBBLE
...
BRAD


IS
THIS...
...ALL
WE
AMOUNT
TO?




...FORGET ABOUT THE ENEMY...
HUF
HUF
HUF
THE ONLY THING WE CUT DOWN WAS THE GRASS TO MAKE ROADS.


WE LEFT SAKUSHŪ TO MAKE NAMES FOR OUR-SELVES...
MAYBE TAKE DOWN A GENERAL OR TWO...
BUT...


AND NOW WE'RE ON THE LOSING SIDE...
WE WERE HANDED MACHETES INSTEAD OF SPEARS...






BRAAP


I'M GOING TO LAST MUCH LONGER...
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
I DON'T THINK...
I WANT YOU TO...
...TAKE CARE OF OTSŪ...
TAKEZŌ, IF I DIE...
HUF
HUF
UR
RRRR
...
HUF
HUF
A SURVIVOR...


!!
TAKE A LOAD OF THIS.
SPLORSH
GIVE ME A BREAK.
YOU CAN'T FOOL ME TWICE, YOU JERK.
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF HUF...
HAD ENOUGH?
ARRGH
FWSH
KRICH
HUH?


!!
FWIP
KAHH!
!!


SHOOM
HUF
HUF
FLASH
!!
!
UR...
THE REAL THING!
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
REFUGEE HUNTERS!
TAKEZŌ !
YOU LITTLE BASTARD !
HUF
HUF
HUF
FWUP
FWUP
...




URR
...
URR
...




...IS STRONG!
THIS KID...
URR
IF YOU'RE GONNA TRY TO KILL ME...
...I'M GONNA KILL YOU.


FWAK
!!
HHUMP
HAHH!
ARGH!


SKRNCH
!!
GAK!
UH--
--OH.
ヂヂヂヂ


KRICH
OOP!
FWOOP
SHIFF
ARGH!
SHIFF


GULP
KRAK


FWOOSH



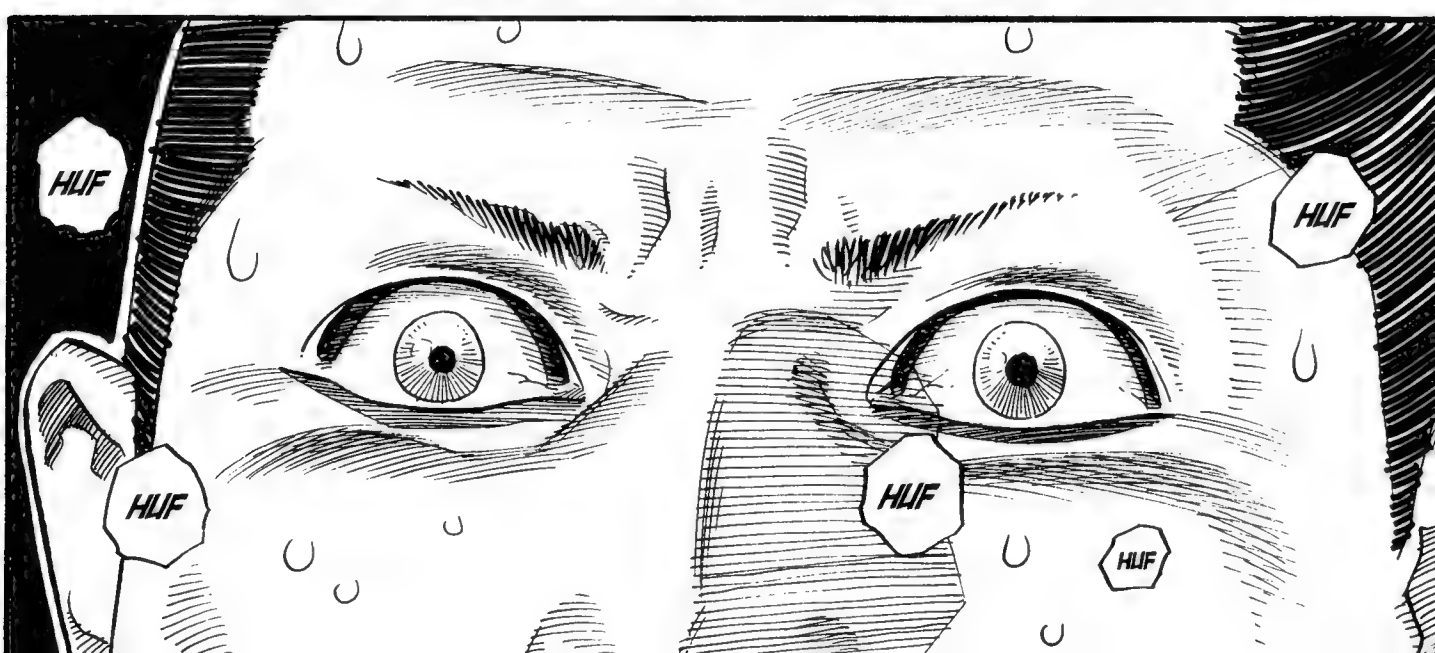
THWOKK


GAK
GAK
OH...
ZHOOSH

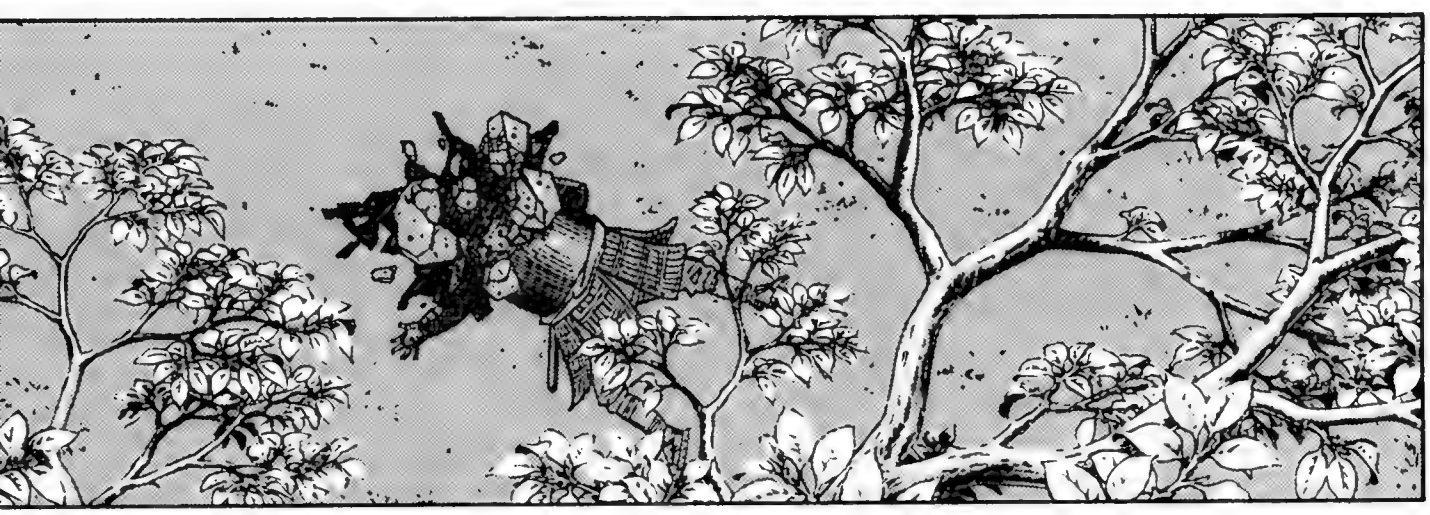

PLISH
PLISH
PLISH
FWUP
FWUP


UHH...
AHH...
HAKK
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF




HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF







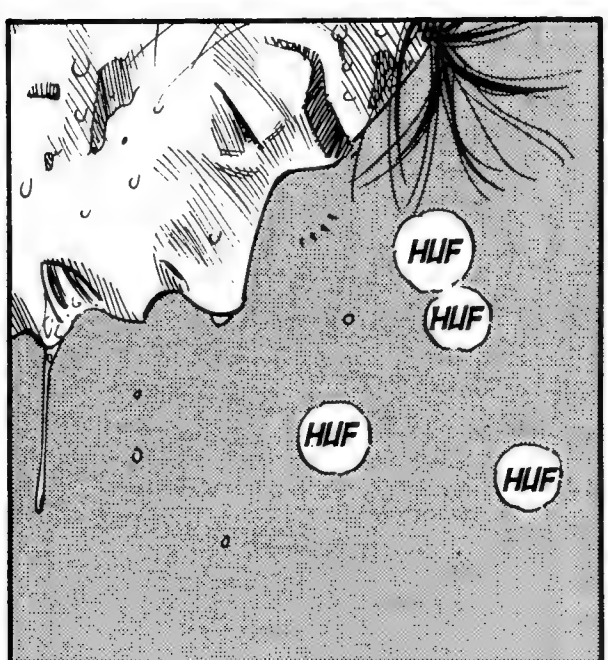

HUF
HUF
HUF
THOSE DAMN SAMURAI!
HUF


NO WAY I'M GONNA DIE.
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
PLISH
PLISH

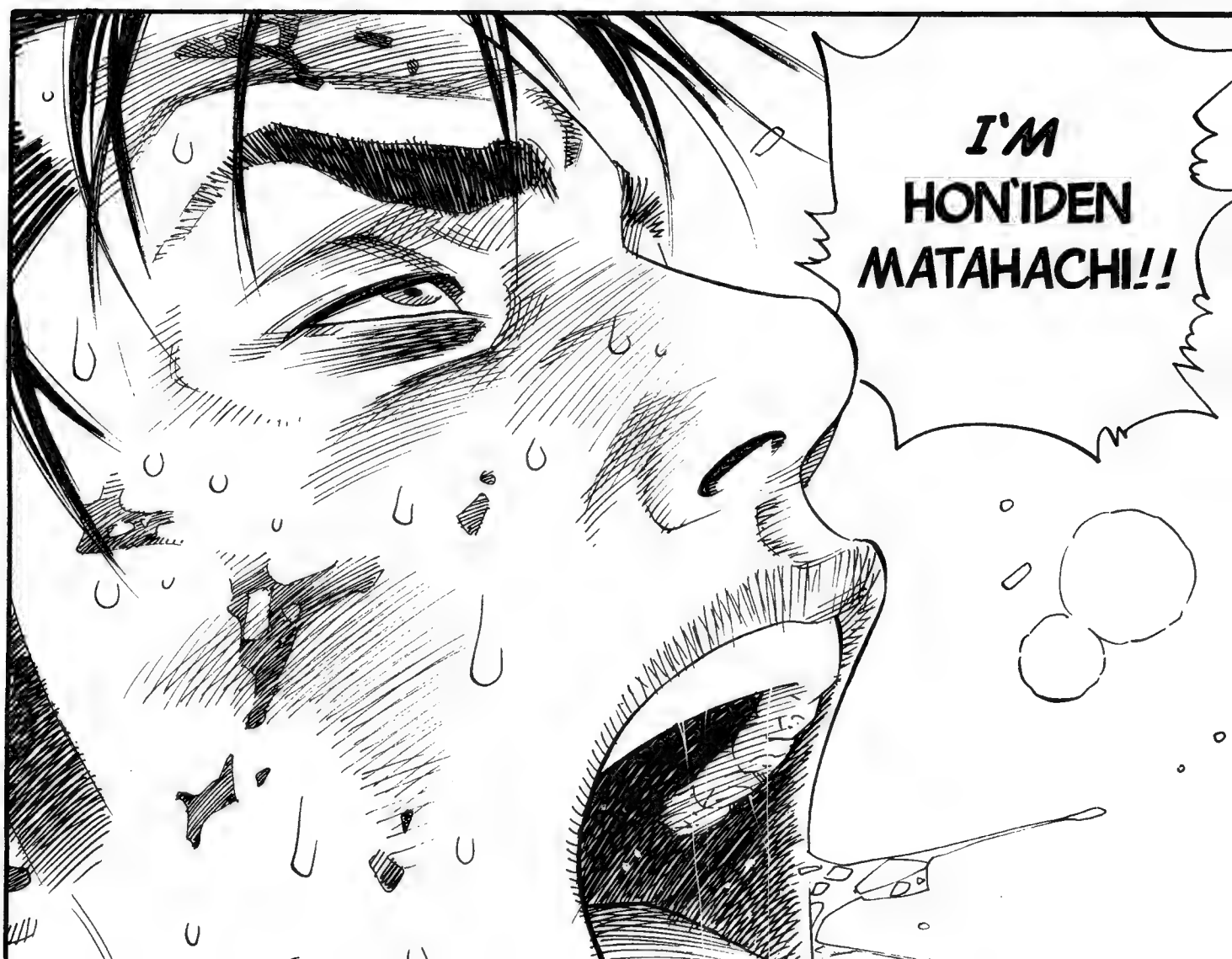

HUF
HUF
NOT ME...
HUF
HUF
PLISH


I'M...
HUF
HUF
SHINMEN TAKEZŌ!
HUF


...
TUGG


HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF


NO WAY I'M GONNA DIE!


I'M HON'IDEN MATAHACHI!!

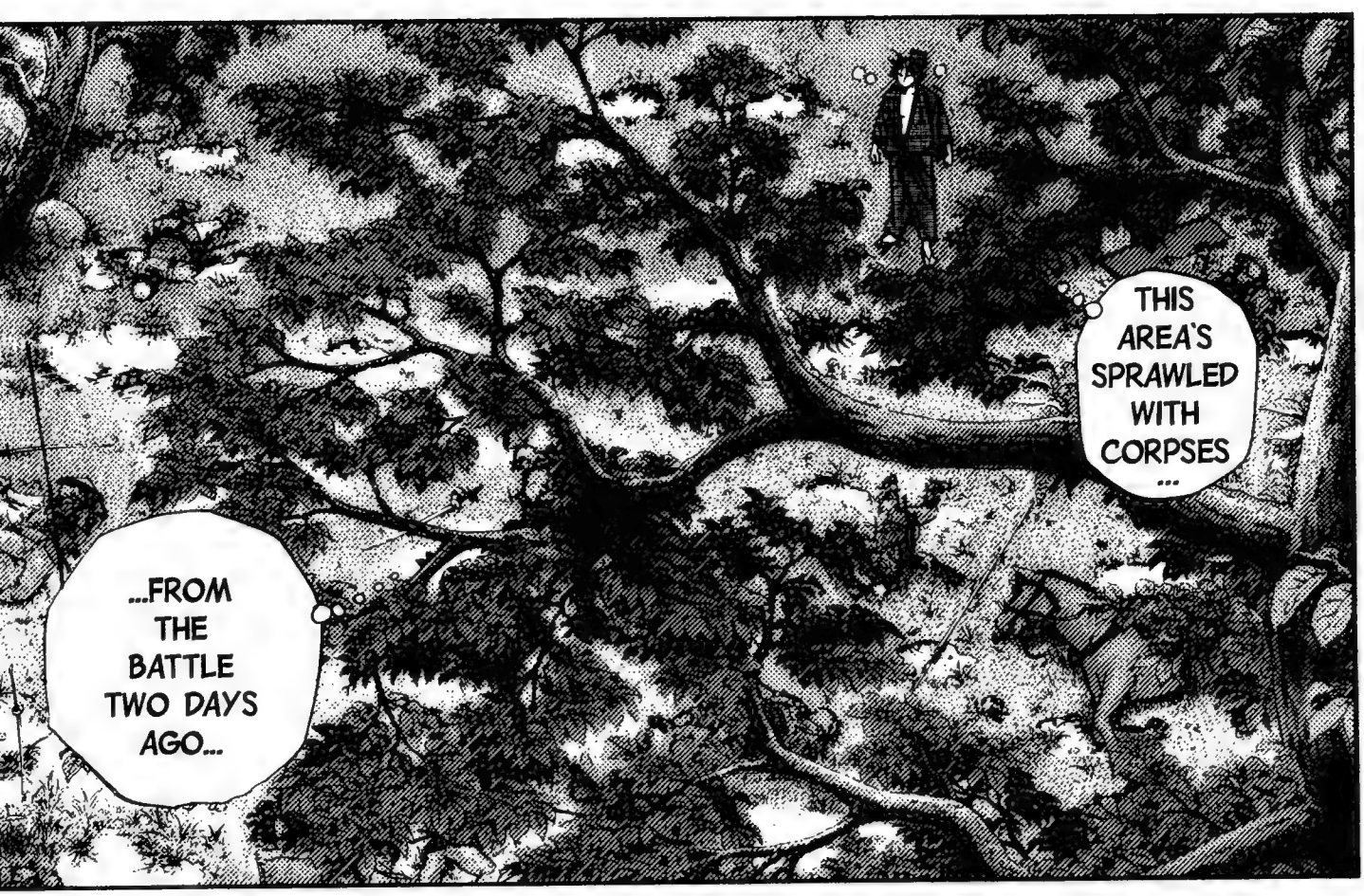

HEY.
FWOOP
WE'RE GONNA MAKE NAMES FOR OUR-SELVES.
YUP.
MATA-HACHI.


HEY...
MATA-HACHI...


HEY...


DING
BRRING
DING
HUF
HUF
HUF
SHUF
SHUF


HUF
HUF
HUF
WHAT'S GOING ON?
HUF
HUF
HUF
NO SIGN OF ANY VILLAGES.


THIS AREA'S SPRAWLED WITH CORPSES ...
...FROM THE BATTLE TWO DAYS AGO...


HUF
HUF
HUF


FOOP
UR...


HUF
HUF
HUF
FOOP
HUF
URR...

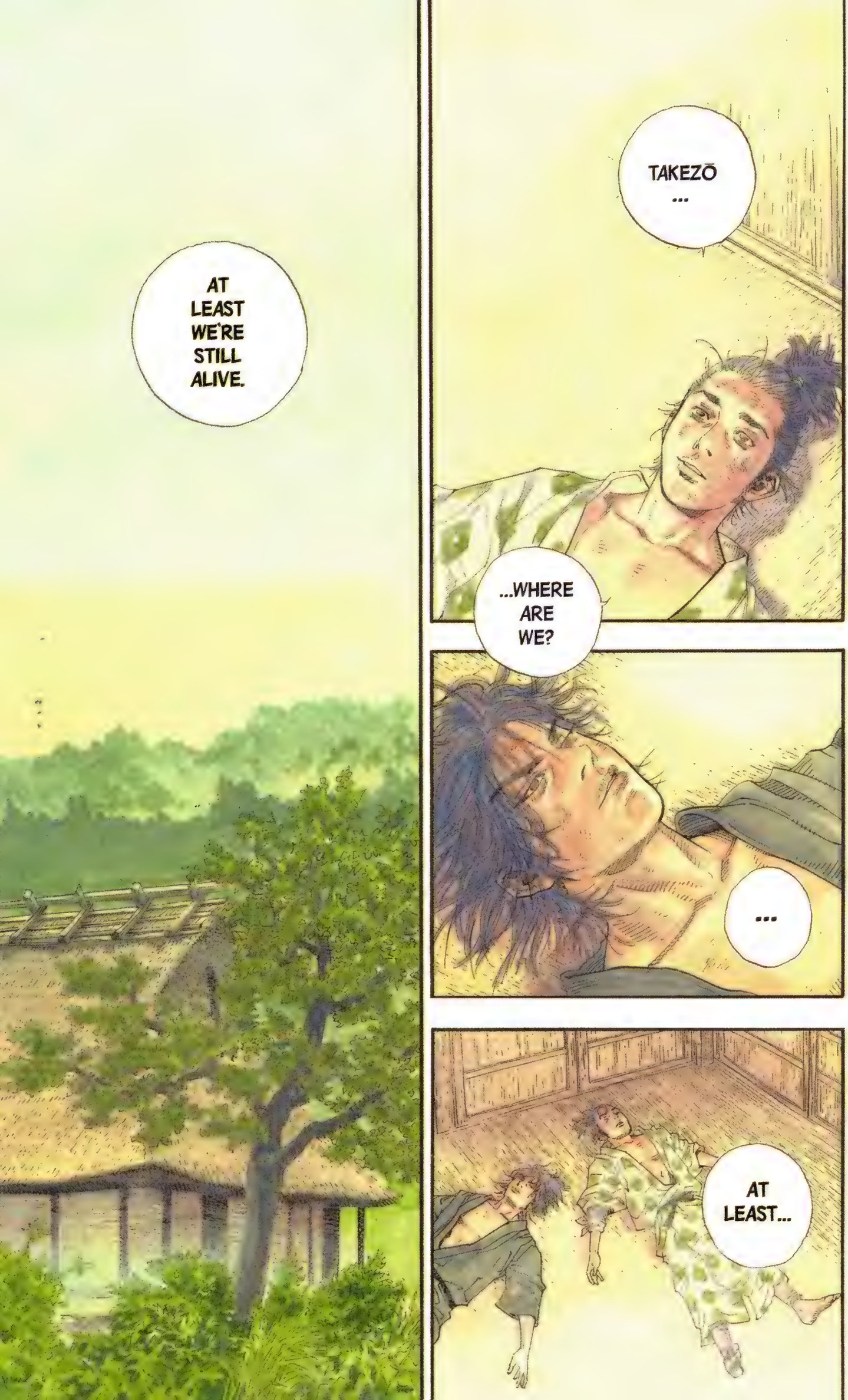

URR...
HUF
HUF
HUF

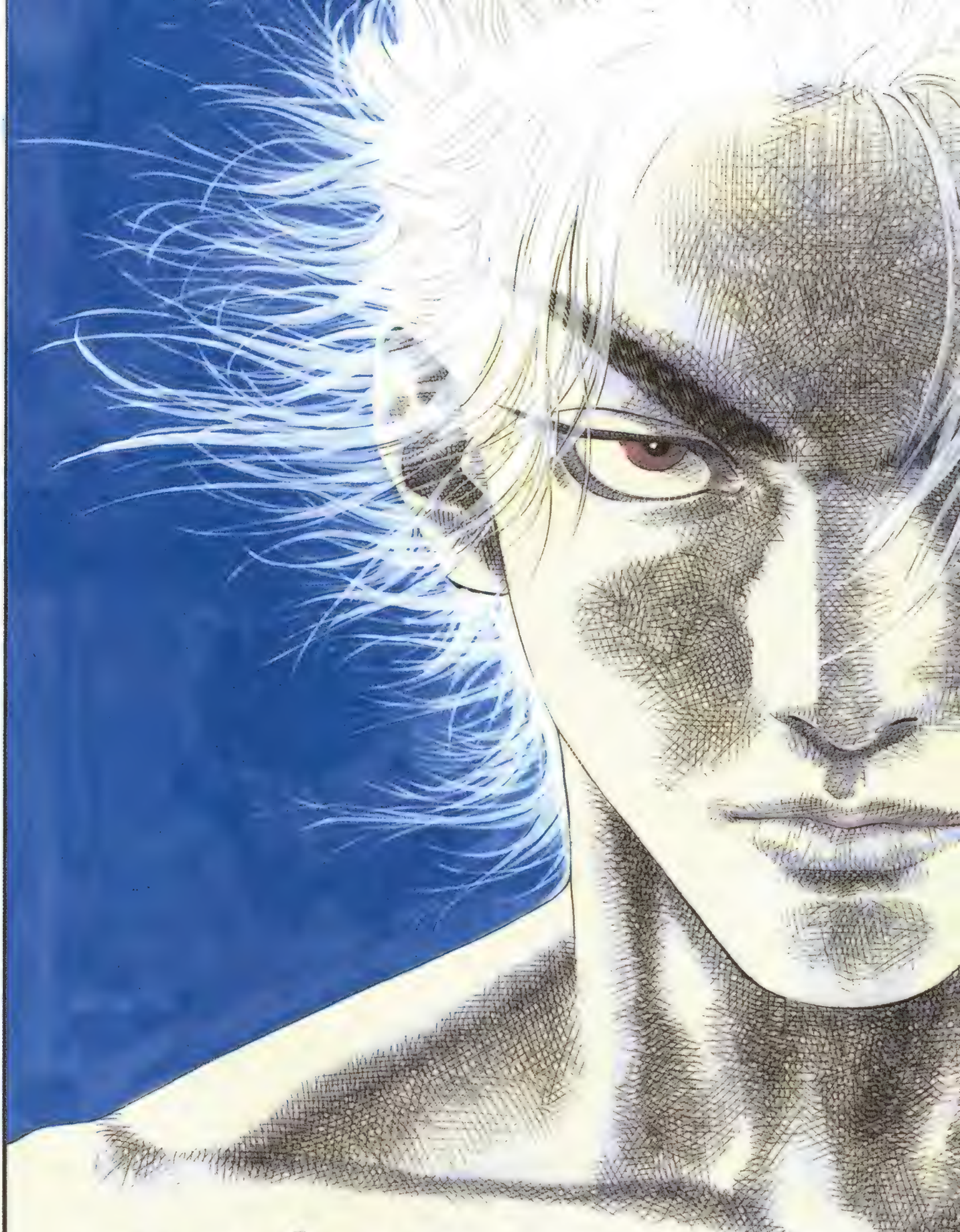

SOME-
THING'S
WRONG
WITH ME
...
...TOO.
HUF
BRR
HUF
HUF
BRR
HUF
TWITCH
AHUK!
PLISH
DING
SOMEONE'S
THERE.
ANOTHER
BANDIT?




Vagabond

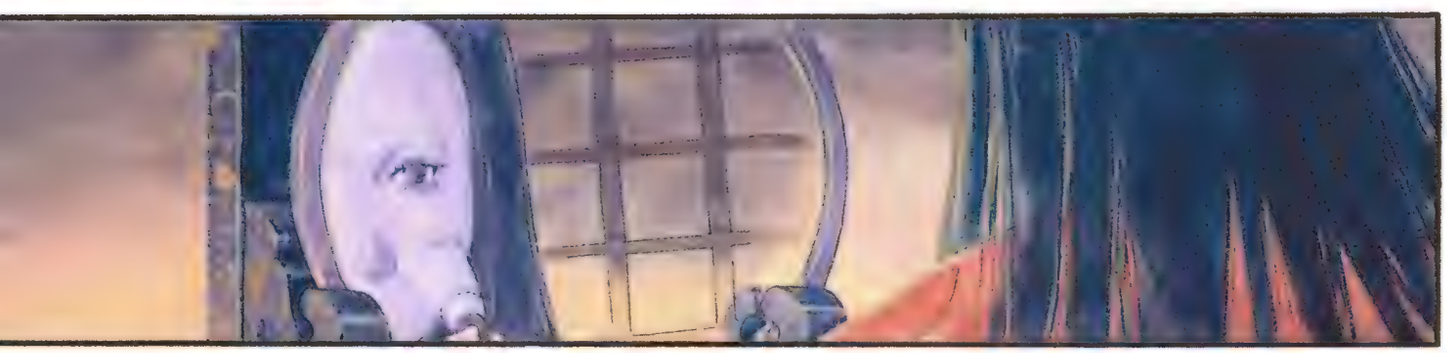

たけぞう
(TAKEZŌ)


AT LEAST WE'RE STILL ALIVE.
TAKEZŌ ...
...WHERE ARE WE?
...
AT LEAST...



#2 | Akemi



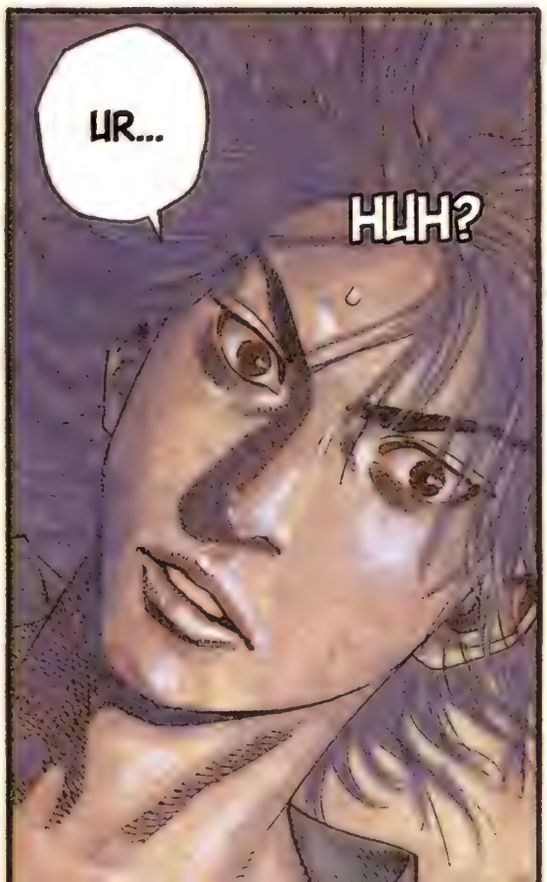




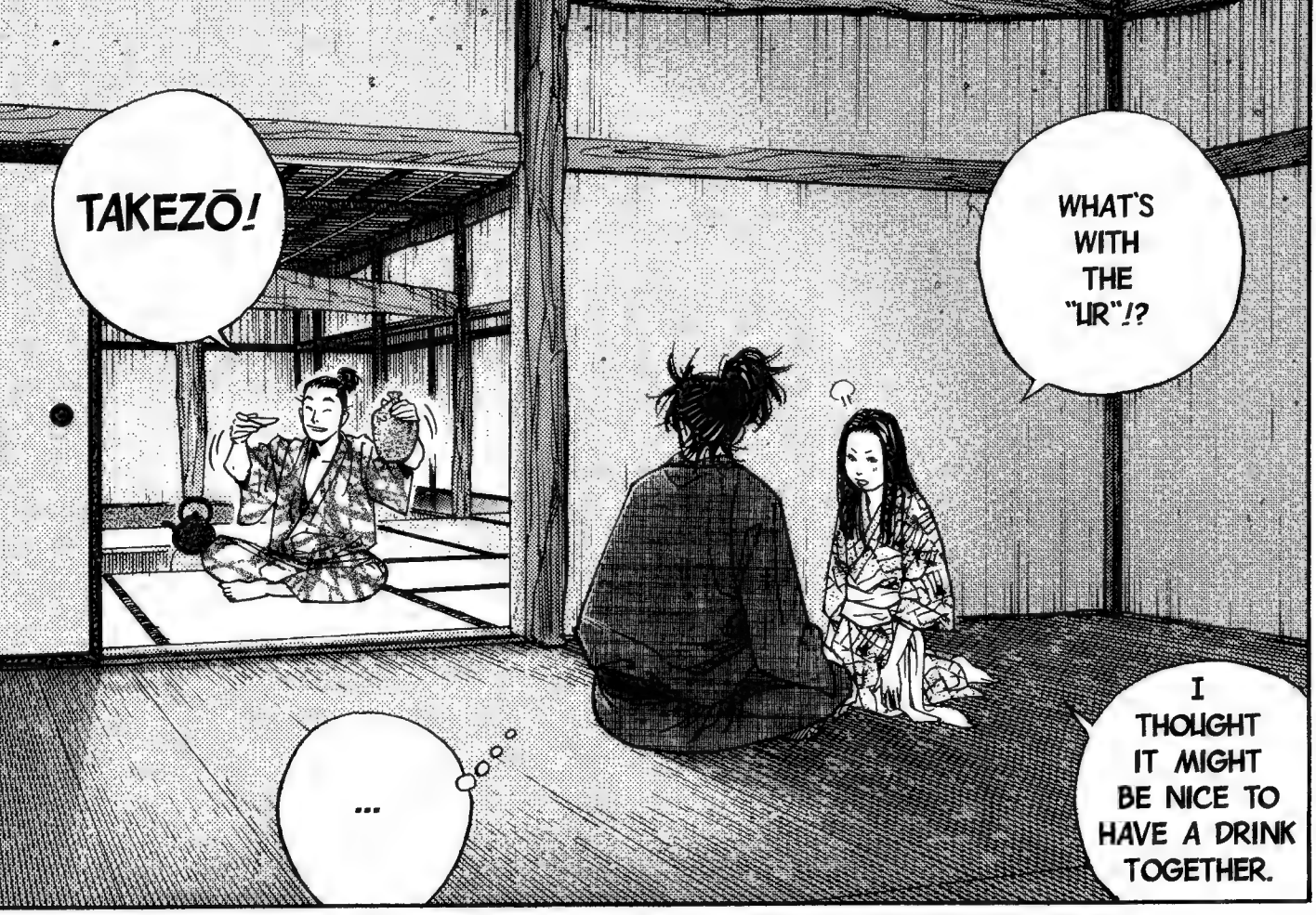


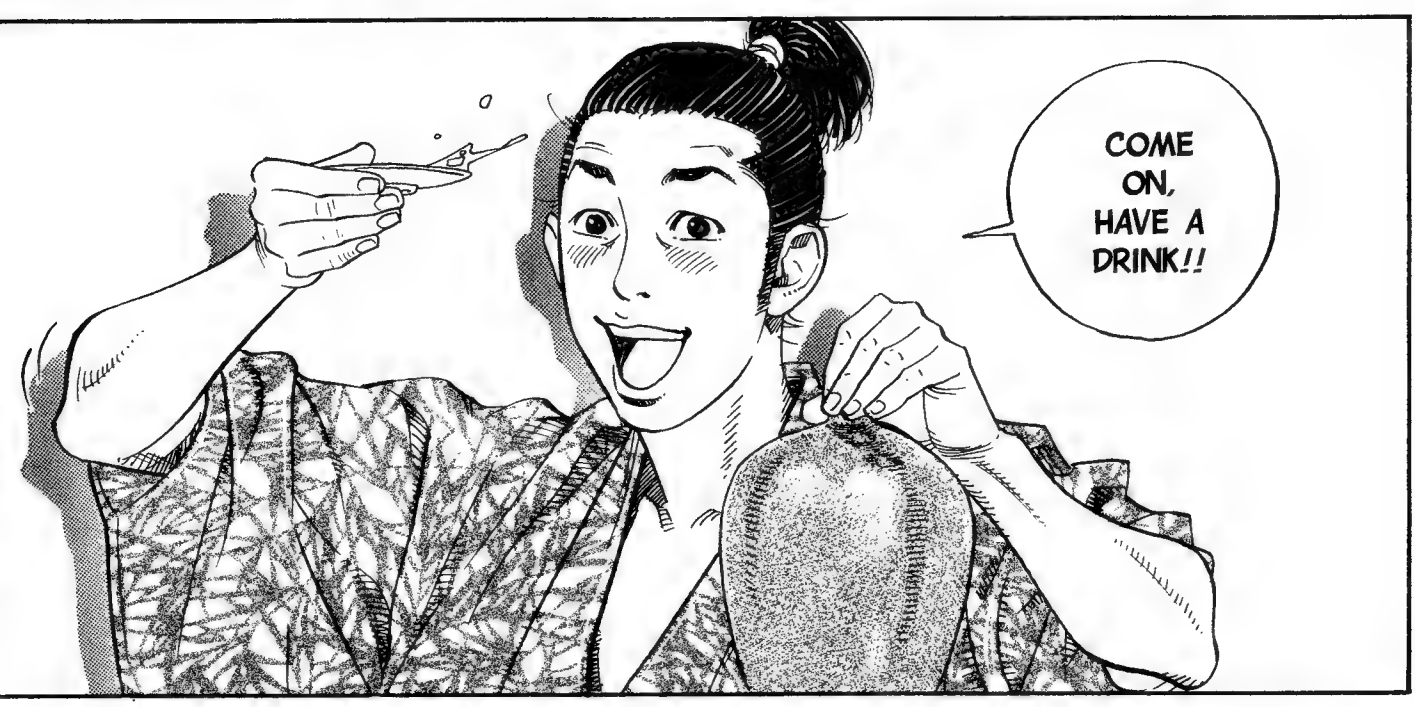





UR...
HUH?


TAKEZŌ.


TAKEZŌ!
WHAT'S WITH THE "UR"!?
...
I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE NICE TO HAVE A DRINK TOGETHER.


COME ON, HAVE A DRINK!!

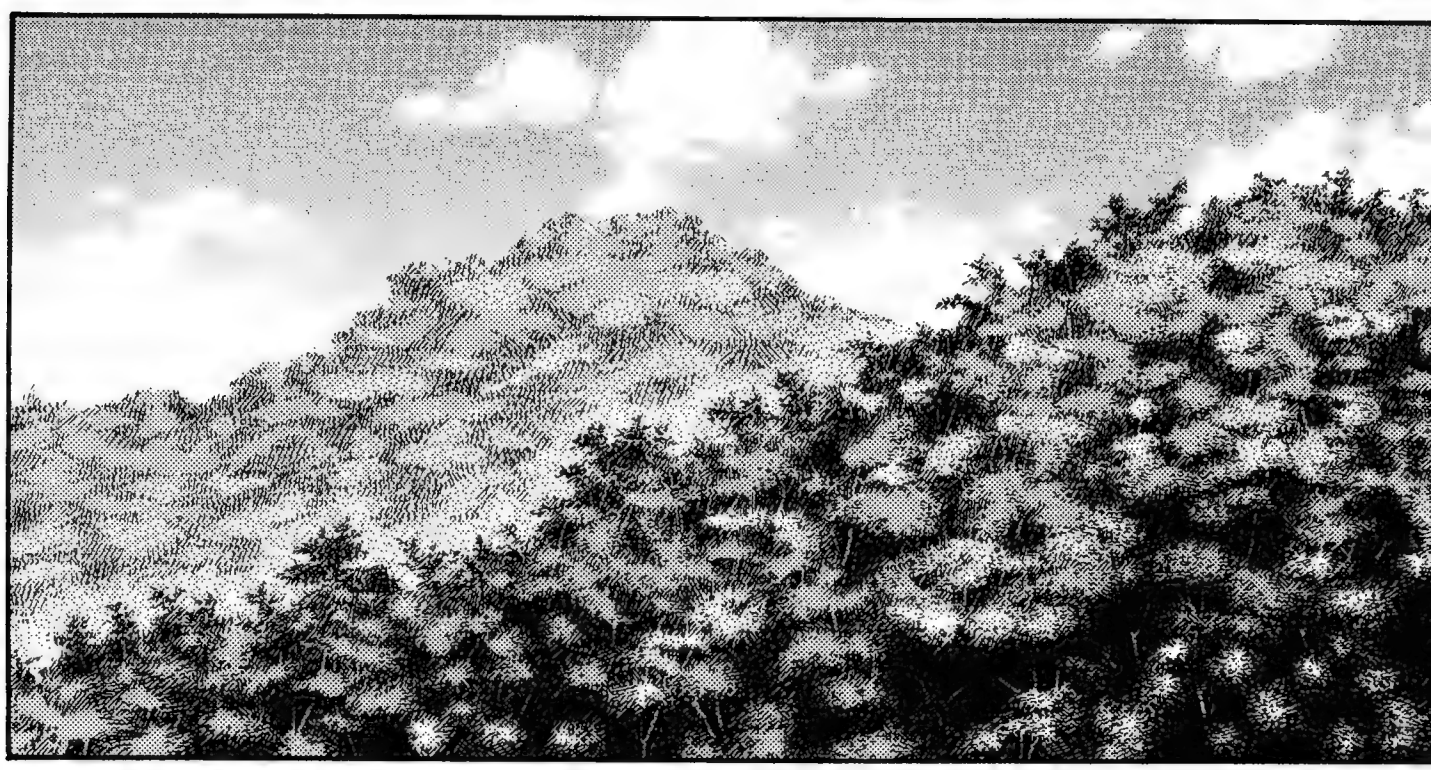

YOU IDIOT!


WE'RE HEALED.
WE'RE GOING, MATAHACHI.


RING
DRRING
WE HAVE TO THANK THEM BEFORE WE LEAVE!!
RING
NOT ONLY DID THEY SAVE US, THEY GAVE US SHELTER FOR DAYS...
AND WE'RE FUGITIVES.
HA HA...
YOU'RE WELCOME TO STAY AS LONG AS YOU PLEASE, TAKEZŌ.
I HEARD THAT THEY'RE STILL CRACKING DOWN ON FUGITIVE SOLDIERS...
...BECAUSE ALL THE GENERALS OF THE WEST HAVEN'T BEEN CAPTURED YET.
ONE OF YOU SHOULD MARRY AKEMI AND STAY HERE FOR GOOD.
WHICH ONE DO YOU PREFER, AKEMI?


...


THERE SHE GOES AGAIN.
RRING
MY, YOU'RE CONFIDENT.
OH, NO! THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT.
I HAVE...
I-UH... NO!
I CAN'T!
SHE REFUSES TO GROW UP.

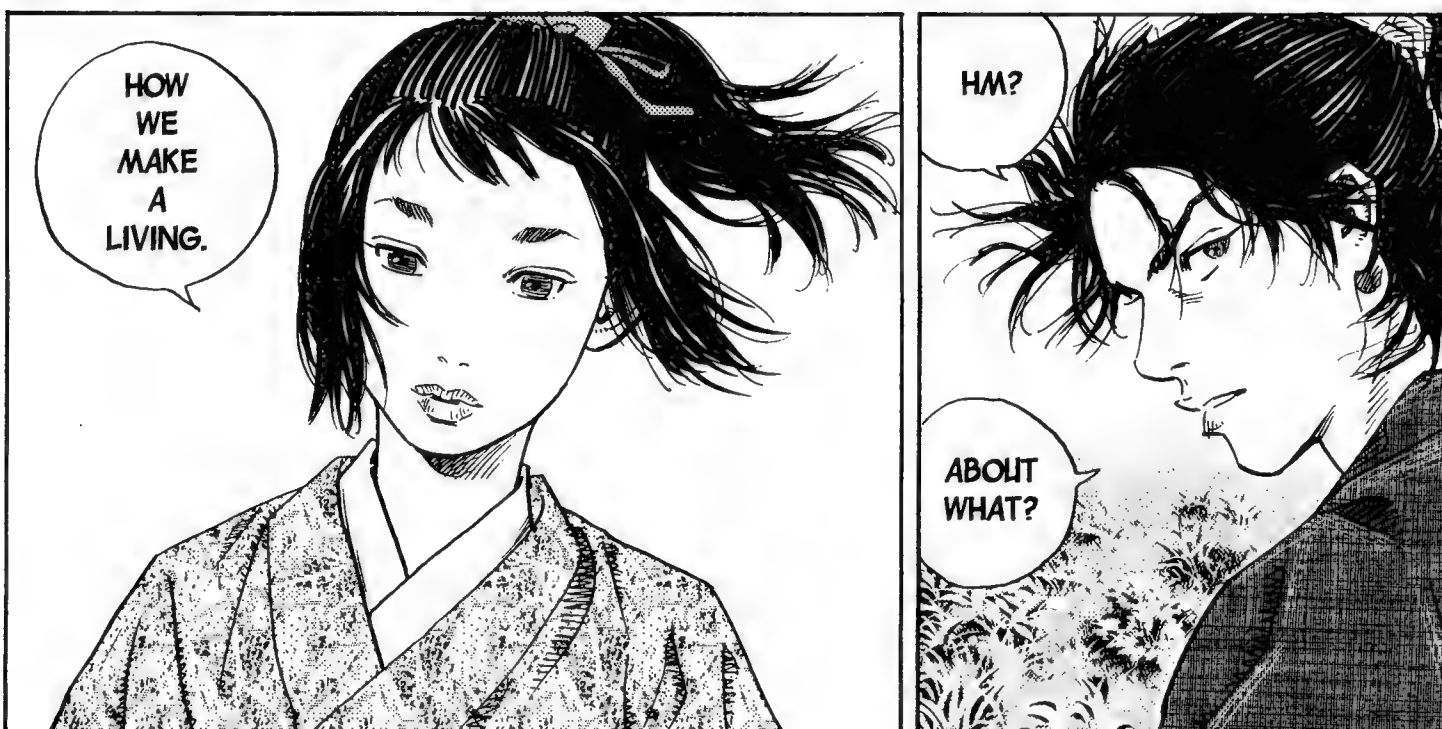



...


FP
FP
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
FWIP
FWIP
CRIMSON MUSH-ROOM.
YOU TRYING TO KILL US...
...TAKEZŌ ?
OH.
FWIP
PANTHER MUSH-ROOM.
POISON-OUS...
LETHAL...
FWIP


...


WHY DON'T *YOU* ASK ME ANY QUESTIONS ?


HOW WE MAKE A LIVING.
HM?
ABOUT WHAT?

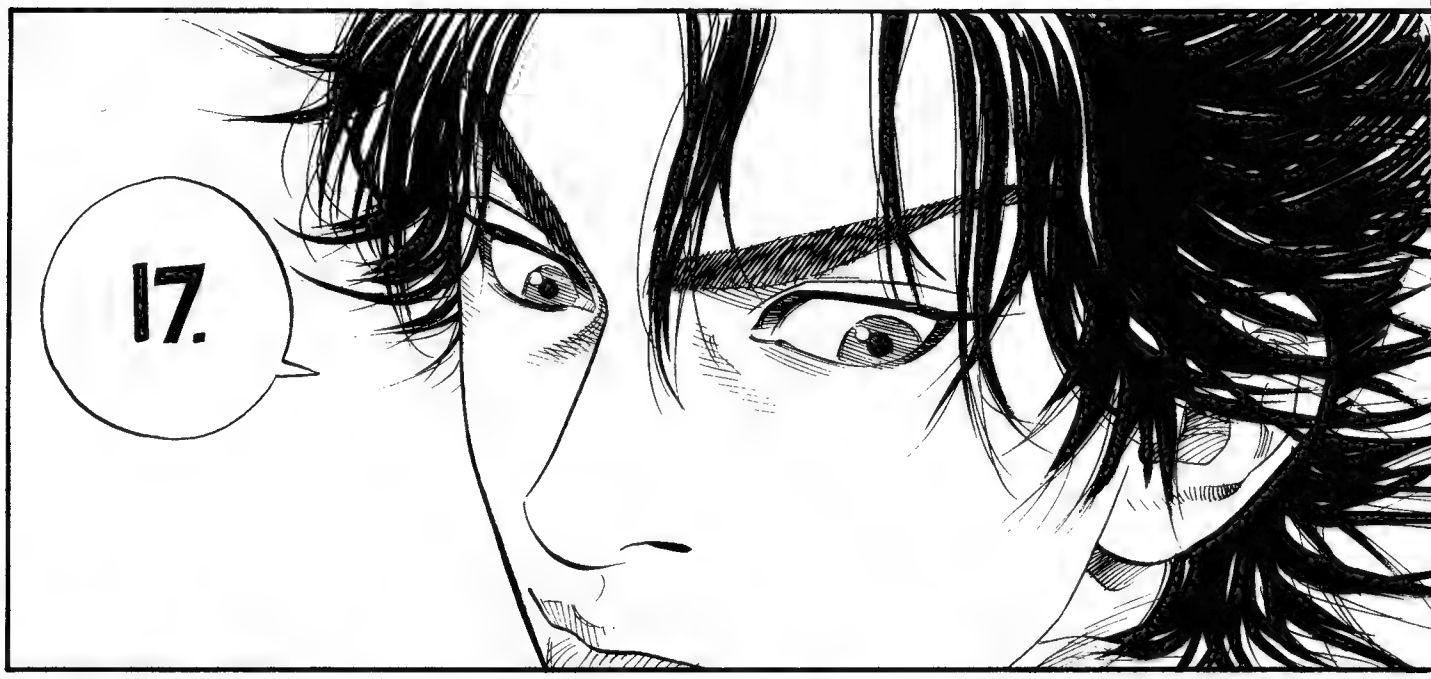

WHY I LIVE IN THE MOUNTAINS WITH MY MOTHER.
MY AGE.
WHY I WEAR THESE BELLS.
WHERE MY FATHER IS.
...


MATA-HACHI'S BEEN ASKING YOU QUESTIONS.
I SEE.
RELENT-LESSLY.
EVERY DAY...


...
...


HOW OLD ARE YOU?
...


HOW OLD ARE YOU?
SHUT UP.
KINDA SMALL FOR YOUR AGE.
...
15!!


17.


ANYTHING ELSE?
...
I THOUGHT YOU WERE MORE LIKE 30.
...!!

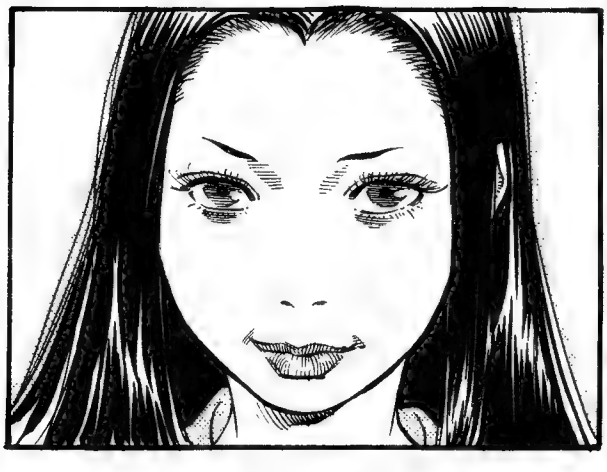

WHAT WERE YOU DOING...
...
...THAT NIGHT YOU RESCUED US...?


RRING
...IN THAT AREA FULL OF CORPSES?


SWORDS?
...?
FWUDD
KRASH
OOPS!
WHAT'S THIS?
WHAT ARE ALL THESE SWORDS ...
...DOING HERE?
!!
THERE'S SO MANY...
YOU FOUND THEM.


OKŌ!






WE'RE THIEVES.




THIEVES...


...ANYTHING WE CAN SELL FOR MONEY.
...AND COLLECT SWORDS, ARMOR...
AFTER EVERY BATTLE WE GO TO THE FIELDS...





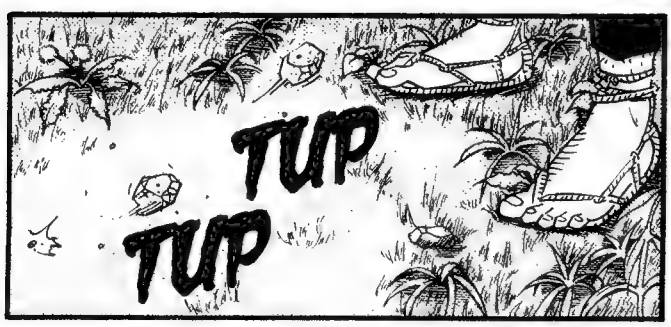

WE STRIP THEM OFF THE CORPSES AND THAT'S HOW WE MAKE A LIVING...WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?


ANY OTHER QUESTIONS ?
...WHO'S THAT?

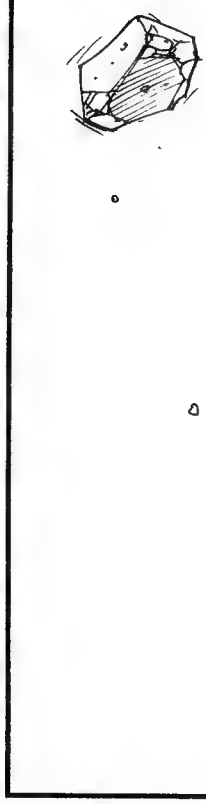






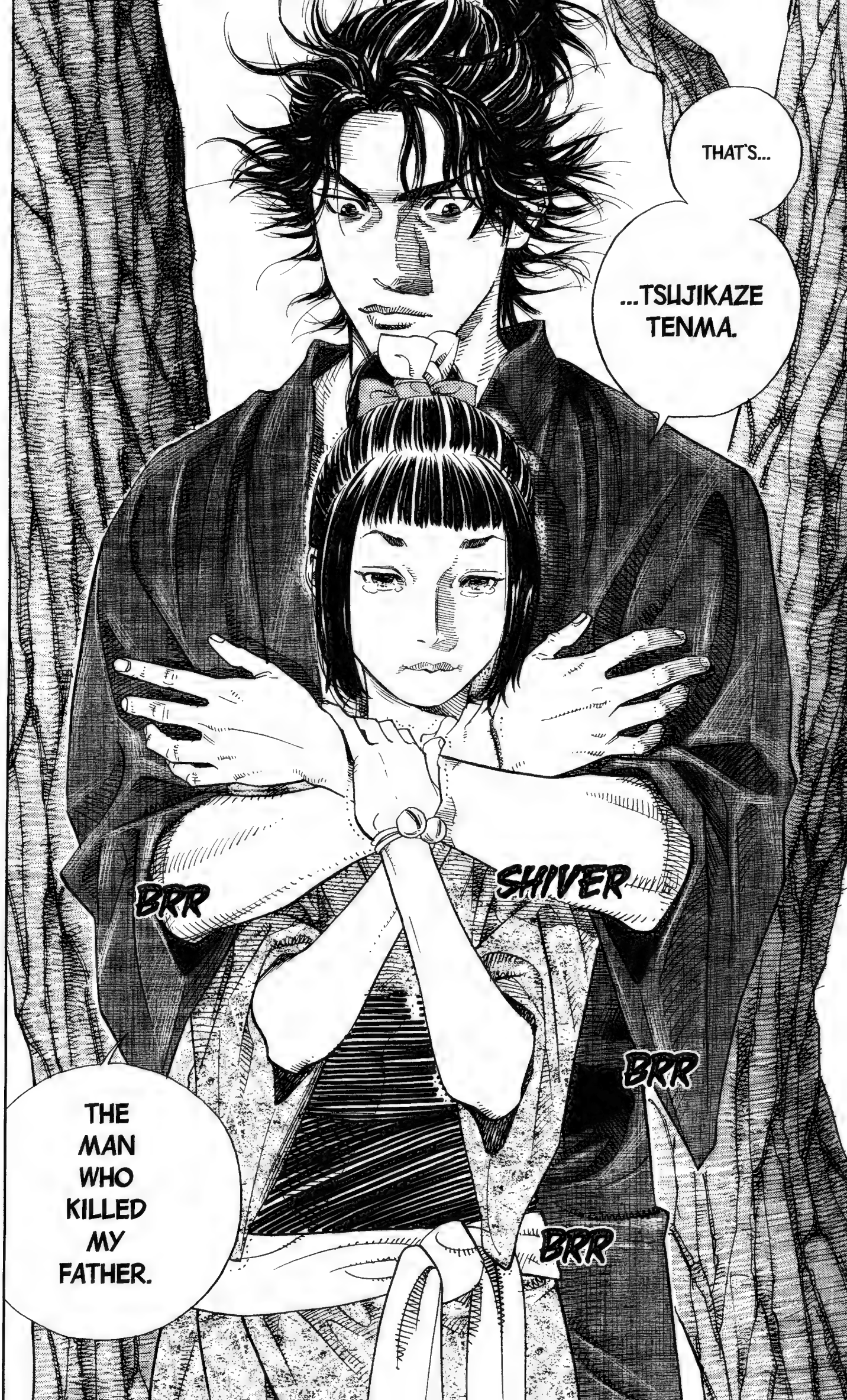

TUP
TUP


HM?
TUP




AKEMI...


...
STOP.
...
BRR
BRR
...
BRR
BRR
SHIVER


THAT'S...
...TSUJIKAZE TENMA.
BRR
SHIVER
BRR
BRR
THE MAN WHO KILLED MY FATHER.


Vagabond


(DRINK UP!)


AKEMI!!


YOU TELL OKŌ THAT I'M WARNING HER...!
THE TSUJIKAZE GANG WON'T PUT UP WITH THIS SORT OF CRAP!!
YOU WENT TO SEKIGAHARA AGAIN, DIDN'T YOU!?


#3 Okō


HE-Y!!
IS THAT ALL OF IT?
THERE'S MORE!!
ALL RIGHT.
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME SOONER...?
AKEMI!
...
AMAZING...
...ALL OF THIS STOLEN FROM BATTLE-FIELDS.


THAT SHOULD BE GOOD ENOUGH TO FOOL TENMA.
HM?
WHAT A COLLECTION ...
PHEW
THAT'S MOST OF IT.
...
DID WE FORGET THAT ONE?
...


FWOOSH




HUH?
TAKE IT EASY, TAKEZŌ...
...TAKEZŌ?
WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE THAT...
!
YUP.
I WANT IT.


I MUST SAY, EVEN JUST AN OAK SWORD...
...MAKES YOU LOOK MORE MANLY.
SMIRK
HA HA!
...
SO CAN I HAVE IT?


I WANT SOMETHING TOO!
OH?
I...
...
AND WHERE WOULD YOU GO?
LET'S LEAVE THIS PLACE!
TAKEZŌ!!


...
COME ON, TAKEZŌ.
BE A MAN AND DRINK SOME SAKE.
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LEAVE. ARE YOU, TAKEZŌ?
WE'RE GOING HOME TO THE VILLAGE OF MIYAMOTO IN SAKUSHŪ.
I DON'T WANT ANY SAKE.


HMPH!
I HAVE A FIANCÉE BACK HOME.
I'M A STUD.


WELL, I WON'T STOP YOU IF YOU LEAVE BY YOURSELF.
SORRY FOR KEEPING YOU HERE THEN.

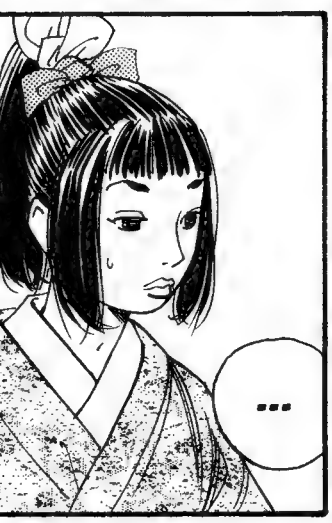

HM?


SHNORR


I SEE...


YOU DO?
OH?
HEY ...
GLUG GLUG GLUG


SHNORR
SHNORR
OH MY!


...


...




HA HA
TAKEZŌ!
YOU'RE PATHETIC!


SHNORR

FATHER...

FATHER...







MOTHER'S GONE.

WHERE'D SHE GO?




YOU'RE NO LONGER TO THINK OF HER...
YOU SISSY...
...AS YOUR MOTHER.
...
YOU LITTLE BASTARD...
DON'T GIVE ME THAT LOOK...

YOU'VE GOT THE EYES OF A BEAST.








!!
FWOOSH


ZING
ZING
URR...

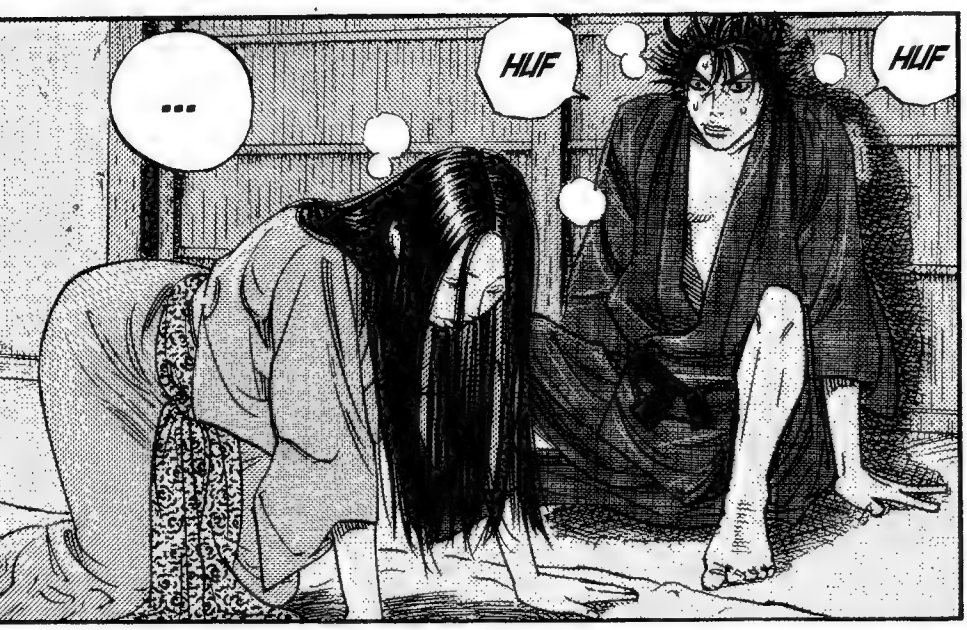

HUH?


TAKEZŌ...


AH.
TAKEZŌ ...
YOU MUST KNOW HOW I'VE BEEN LOOKING AT YOU...
WHAT IS IT?
YOU'RE SUCH A BOOR...

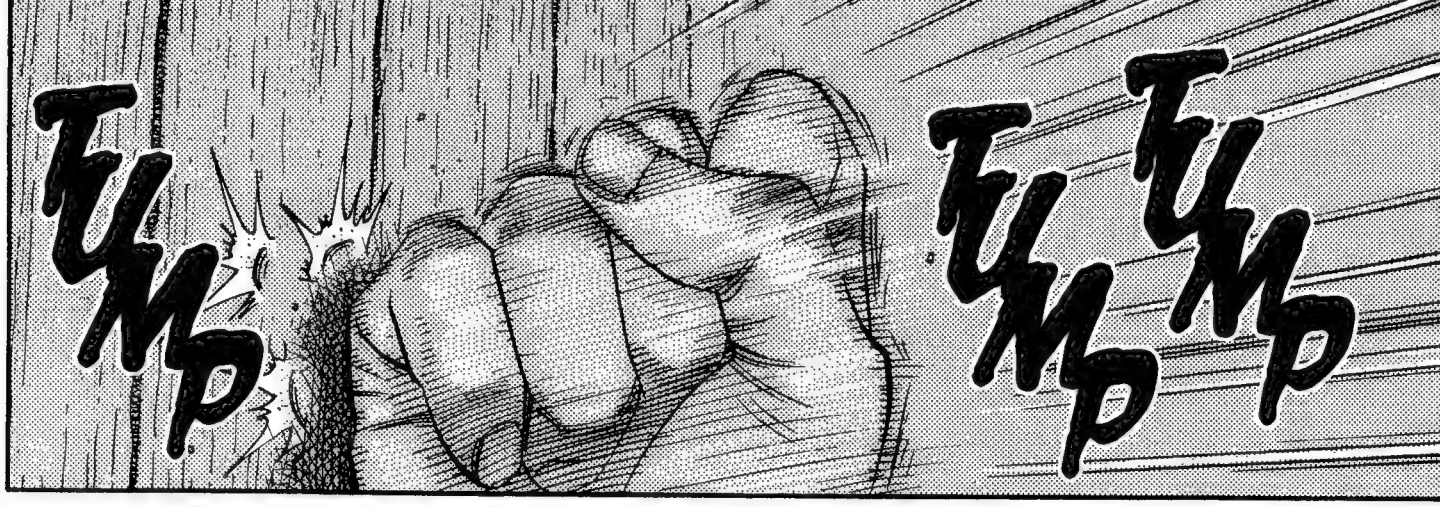

CAN'T YOU FEEL IT?
BRR

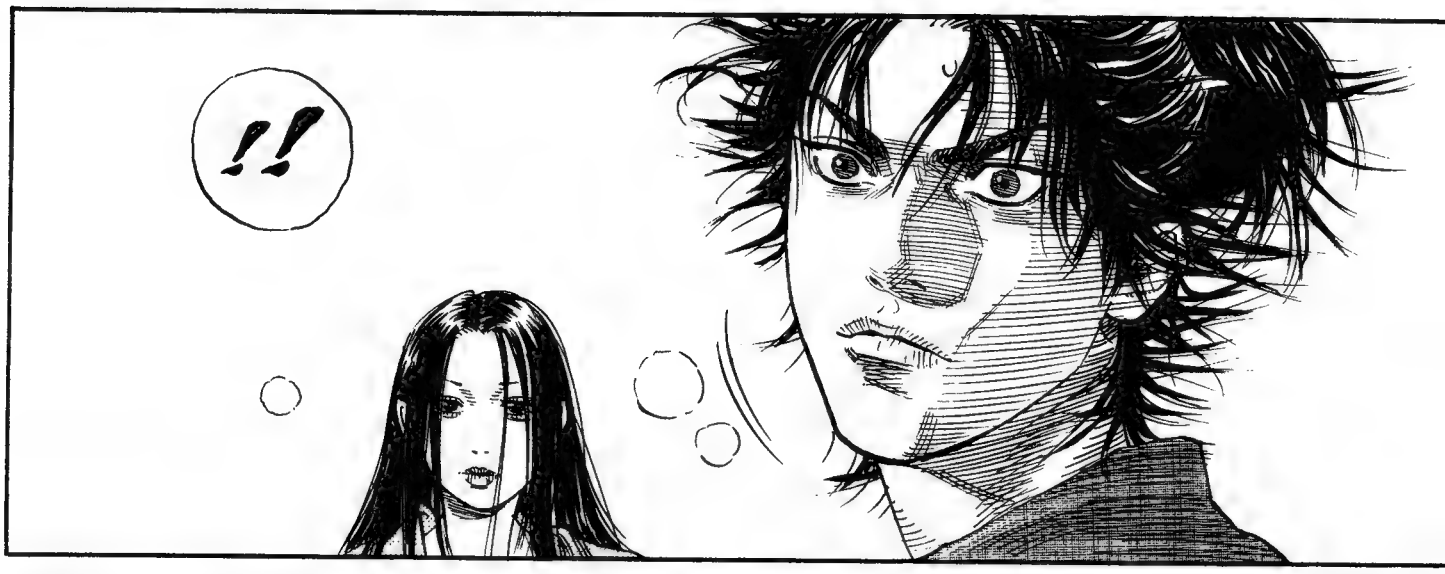

SHLP
!!


...
HUF
HUF


TAKEZŌ
...


STOP!
FWOOSH


THP
THP THP


!!


THP
THP THP
IT'S THE TSUJIKAZE GANG!!
THP


Vagabond

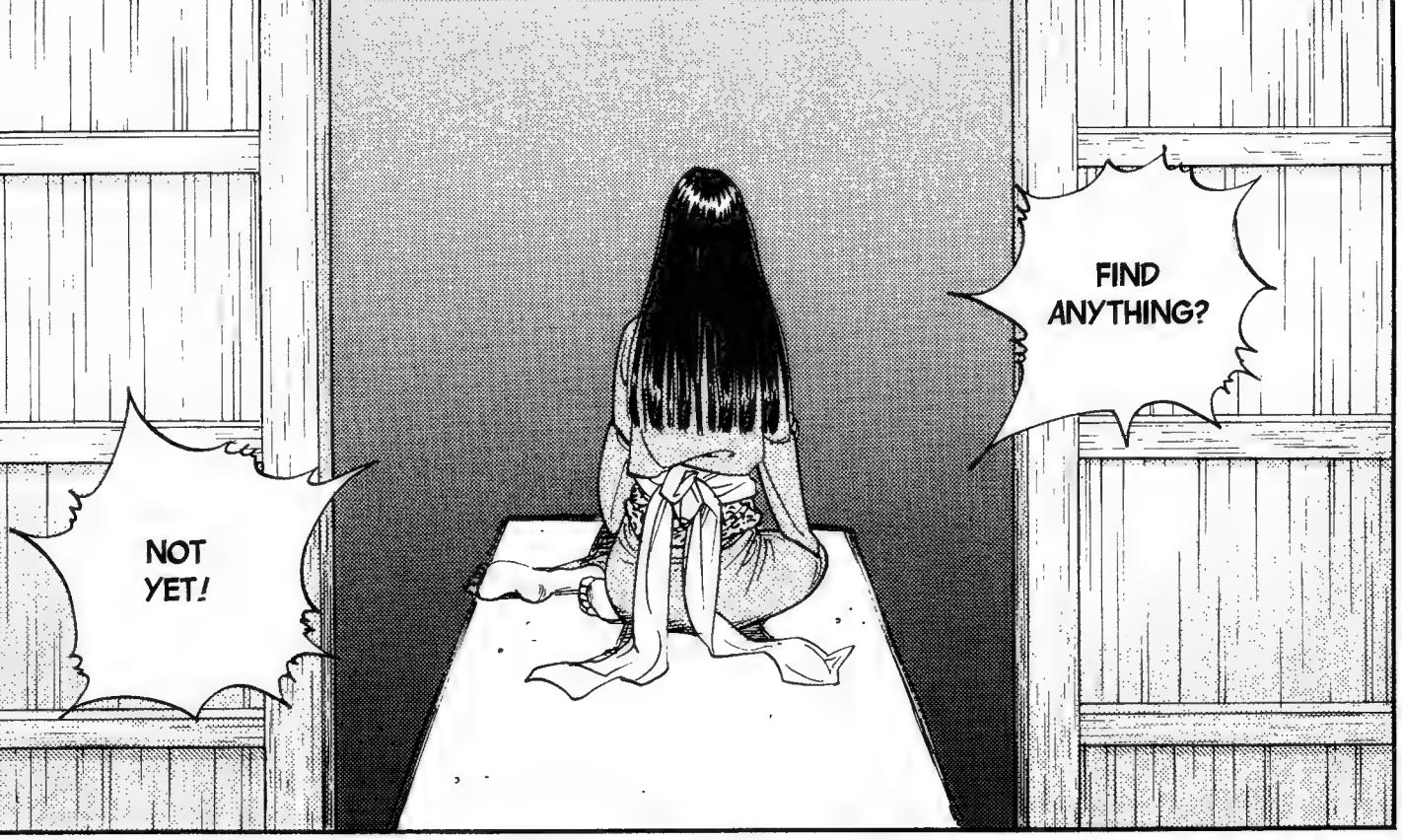

(OH, C'MON!)


TAKEZŌ ...
HOW DARE YOU! EMBARRASS ME LIKE THIS...
EM-BARRASS YOU?
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP


OKŌ ...!
OPEN UP!!
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP



#4 The Brigand Tsujikaze

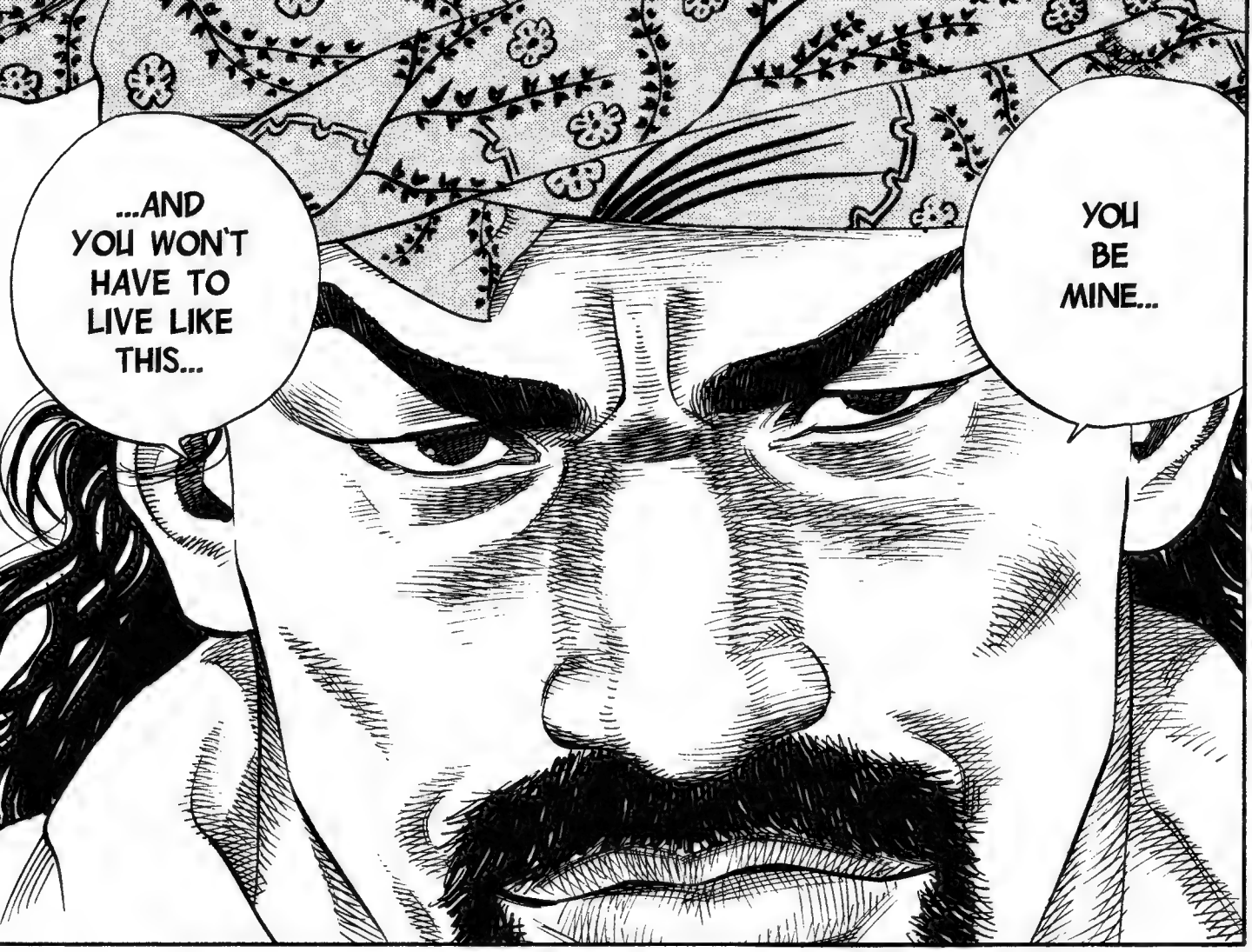

FIND ANYTHING?
NOT YET!

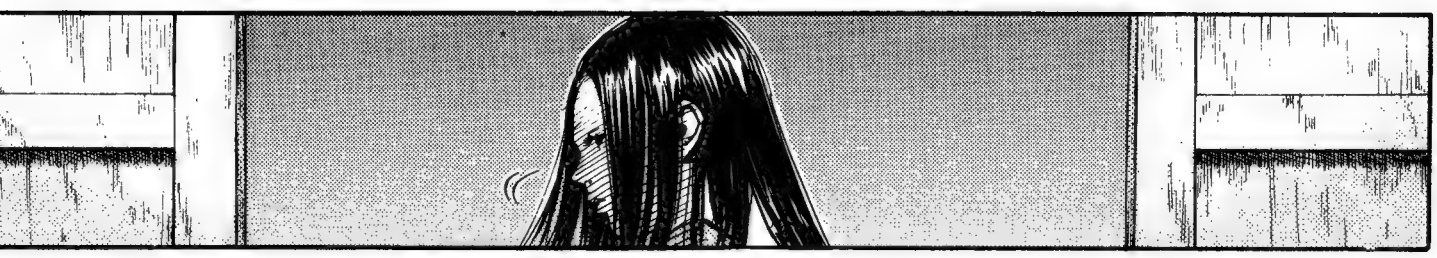

OKŌ...

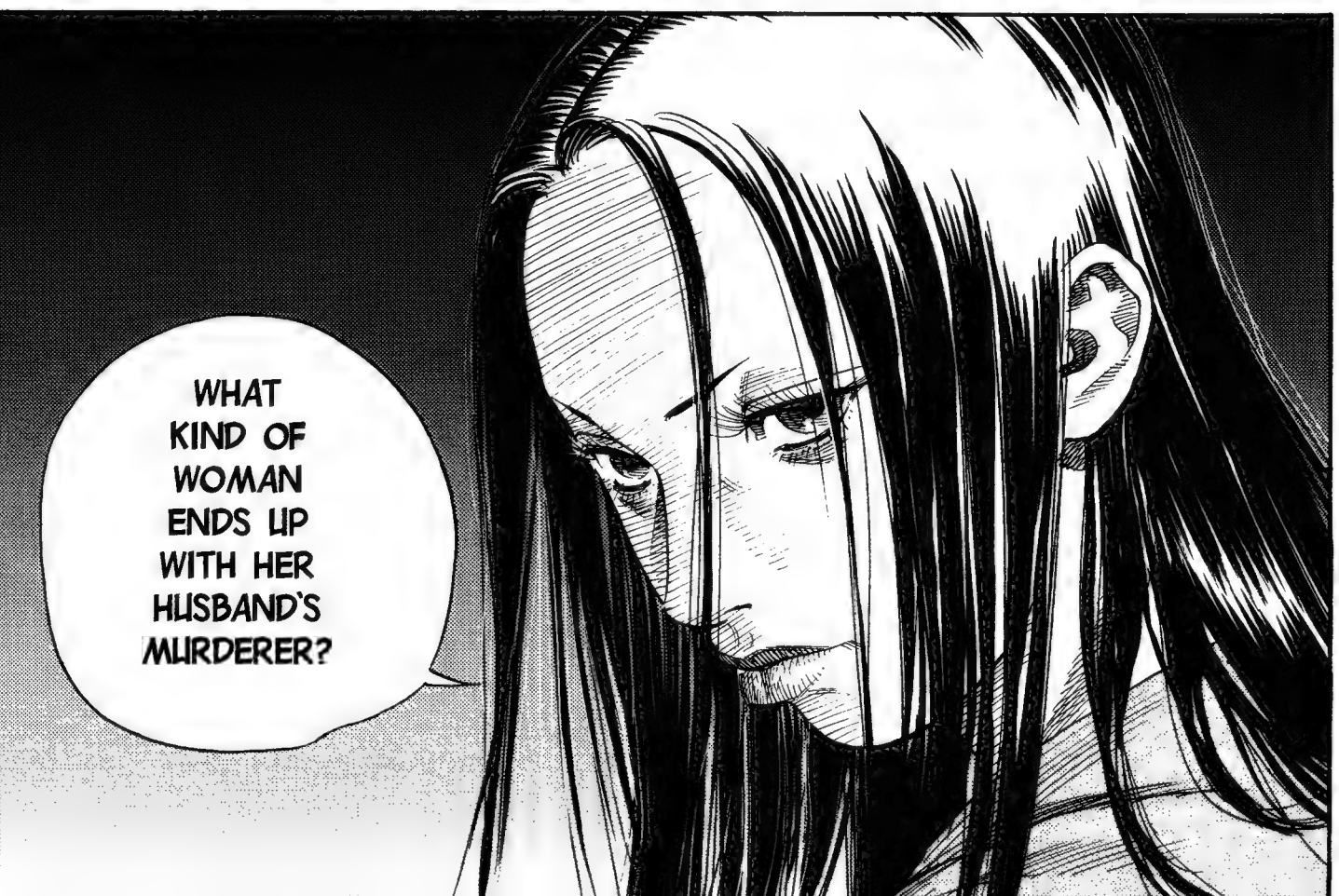

OKŌ!!
WHERE'D YOU HIDE THE STUFF?!
COME ON!!




HOW ABOUT SOME SAKE?
...GET IT YOURSELF.
YOU KNOW WHERE IT IS...
I *HAVE* TO SEARCH YOUR HOUSE.
EVEN BRIGANDS HAVE THEIR CODE.
I HAVEN'T STOLEN ANYTHING.
HAH...

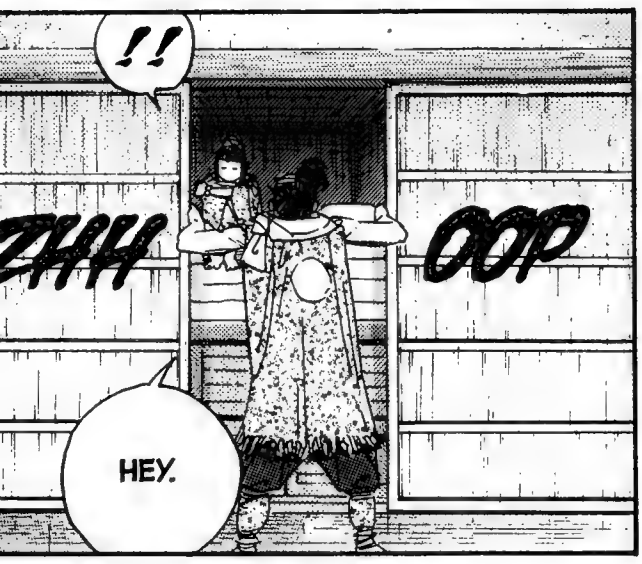

...AND YOU WON'T HAVE TO LIVE LIKE THIS...
YOU BE MINE...



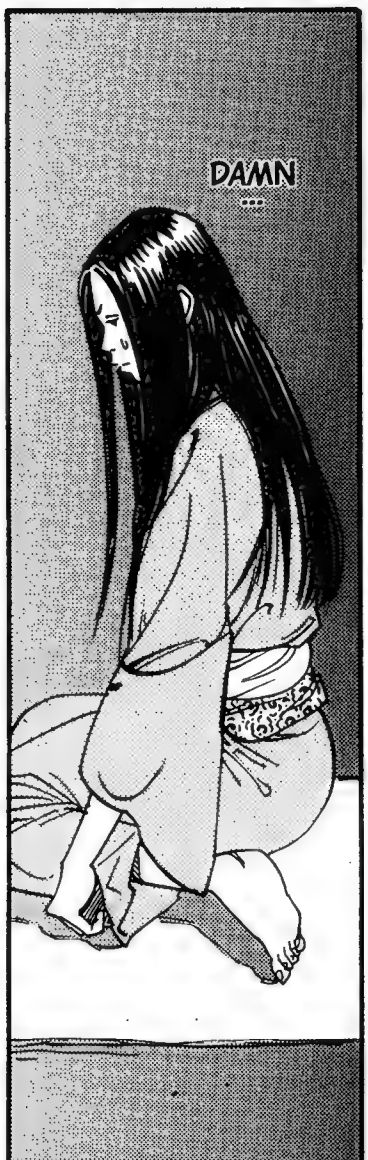

WHAT KIND OF WOMAN ENDS UP WITH HER HUSBAND'S MURDERER?


YOUR FACE...
...MAKES ME WANT TO PUKE.
CHECK THE CEILING.
HEY.
YES SIR!


WHUD
WHUD
WHUD

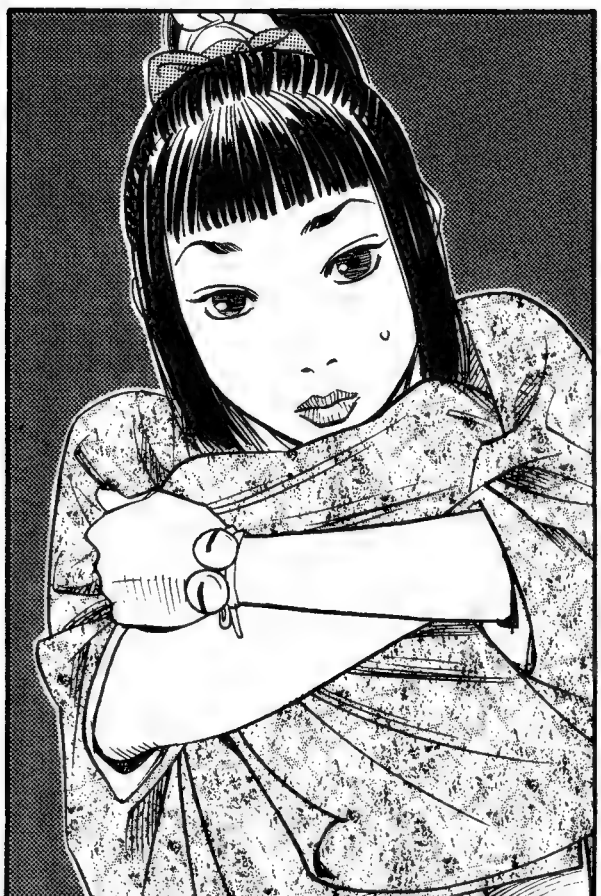

!!
OOP
HEY.


UH-OH
IT'S THE KID.


DAMN...




RAPE HER.






...
YOU'RE A FOOL.






OKŌ...
...
...?
BOSS?
DON'T MESS WITH ME.

KRRSH
!!
ARGH!
WHUD


UR...
FWOOSH


ボボ
17


THOK
THOK
THOK
THOK
YOU LITTLE TWERP !!


!
KRNCH


TA-


TAKEZŌ !


ARRGH!






...
PLISH
PLISH
PLISH
PLISH
PTU


THUNK


Vagabond


犯せ
(RAPE HER!)
(TSUJIKAZE)


...
HUF
HUF
HUF
I'M GLAD I LEFT MIYAMOTO ...
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
...BUT YOU'RE STILL A GENERAL...
YOU MIGHT BE A BRIGAND...


AND I'LL HAVE YOUR HEAD.
SMIRK
#5
Blood Game


ULP
YAHHH!
SLSH!


ARGH
YAH!
SLASH
AIEEE
YAHHH!
URGH
YAH!
ARRGH
LET MY GUARD DOWN...
URR
AIEEE


THP
BOSS
!?
!?
!!
ARGH
TOK


YOU COWARD...
HUF
HUF
HUF
HOW CAN YOU RUN AND STILL CALL YOURSELF THE LEADER!?


HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF


HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HIS EYES... I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE LOOK LIKE THAT.


...OR A BEAST!
HUF
HUF
LIKE A DEVIL...
HUF


HUF
HUF
HUF
RETREAT FOR NOW.
I'LL COME BACK PREPARED.






HUF
I WAS CARELESS CAUSE HE'S JUST A KID.
HUF

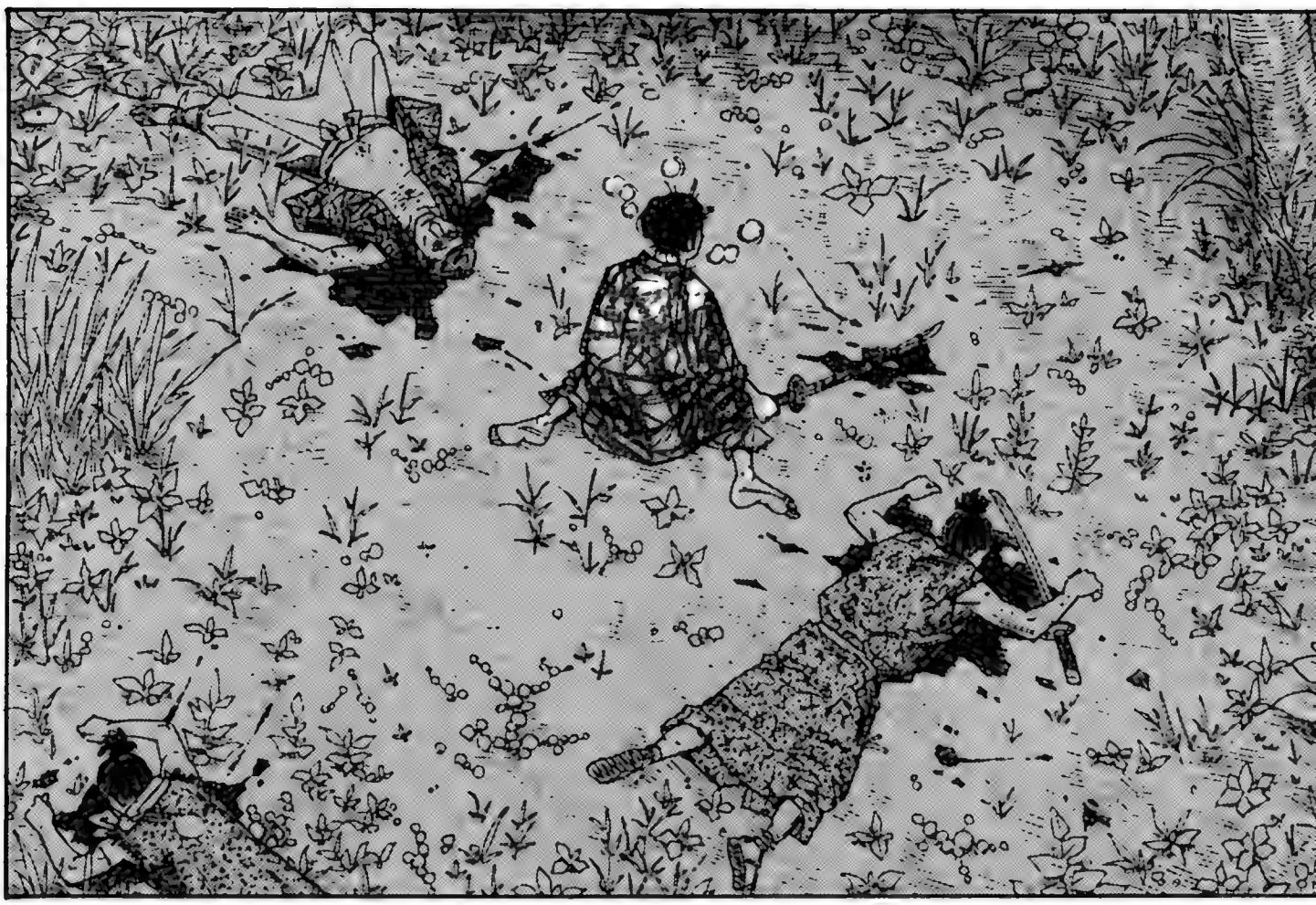



KYOK
KAKKAKKAKK


KRAK
HUF
HUF
HUF


HUF
FWISH
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF






TAKEZŌ
...

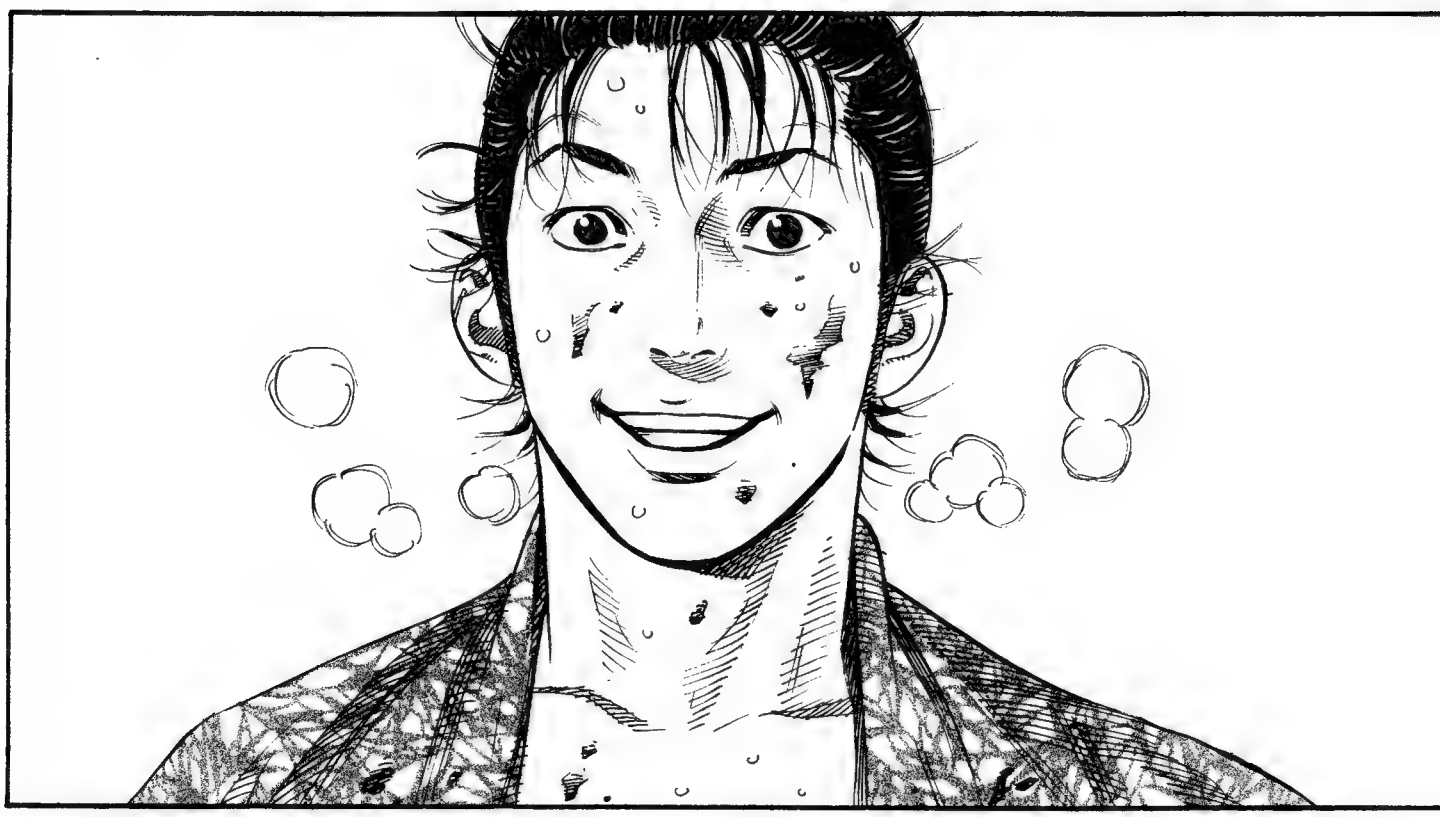





FIP


HOW WAS THE BOSS?
FREE-BOOTERS ARE WEAKLINGS!

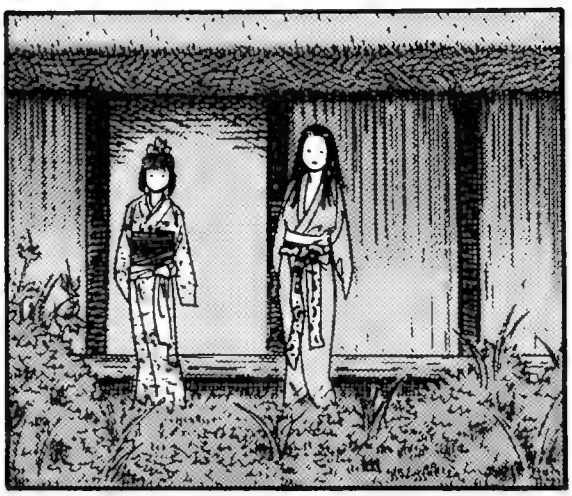

NOTHING SPECIAL.




...FROM THE VILLAGE OF MIYAMOTO IN SAKUSHŪ.
...AND SHINMEN TAKEZŌ...
HON'IDEN MATAHACHI ...


WE'LL TAKE *ANYONE* ON!!

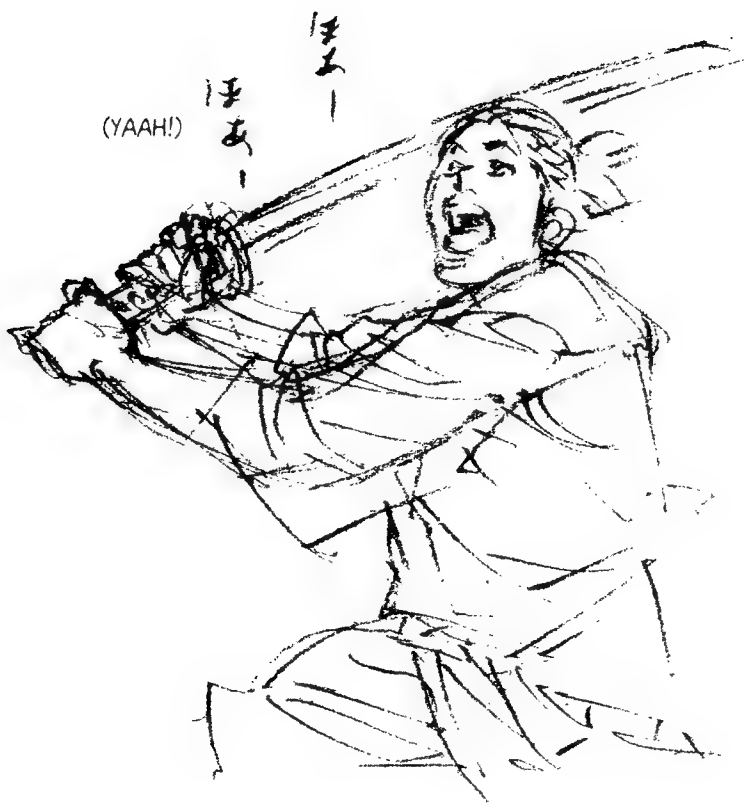

HA HA HA
...PLAYING A GAME OF BLOOD.




THEY'RE LIKE KIDS...


WE'RE LEAVING.
WHAT WILL YOU TWO DO?
HUH?
YEAHH
WE CUT DOWN FOUR MEN!!
BY WHO?
...TO AVOID GETTING KILLED.
WE'LL HAVE TO LEAVE HERE NOW...
TSUJIKAZE KŌHEI.


Vagabond

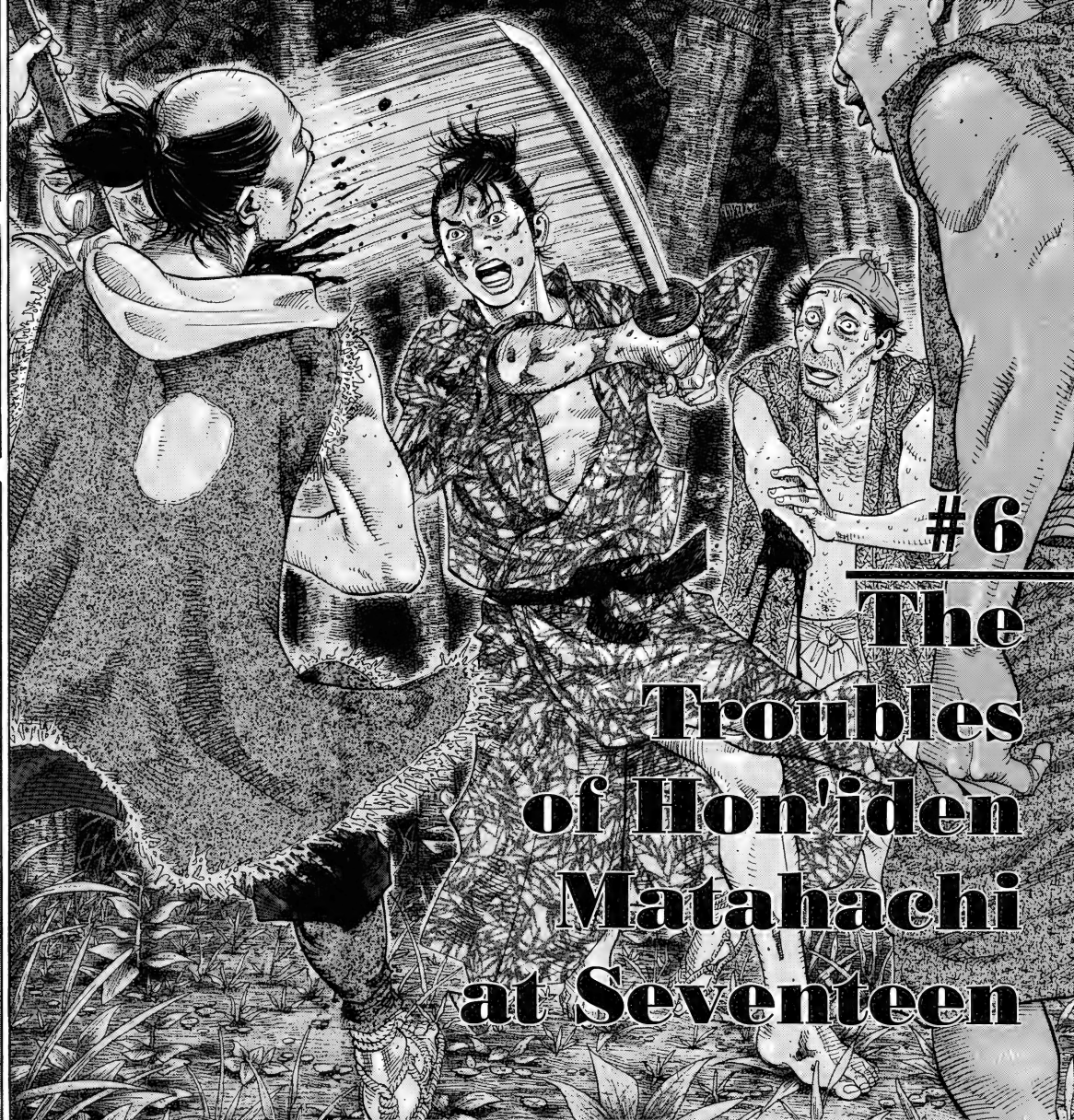

(YAAH!)


HMMM...
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO SLEEP...?
FWEE
FWEE
SHMP
...
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE...
I KILLED SOMEONE
HMPH... I'LL TAKE HIM ON!
TSUJIKAZE KOHEI...?
TENMA'S YOUNGER BROTHER?







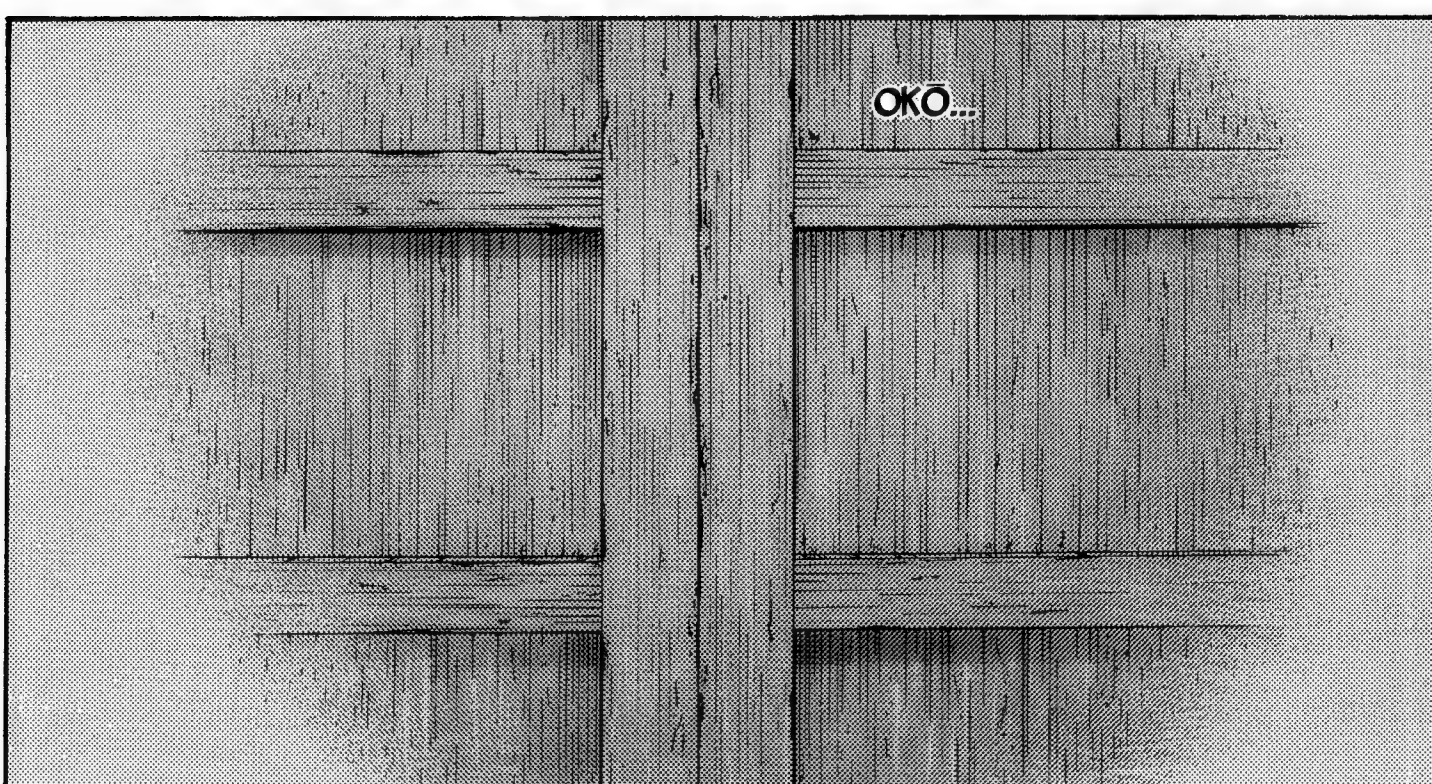


#6
The Troubles of Hon'iden Matahachi at Seventeen


...
FUP

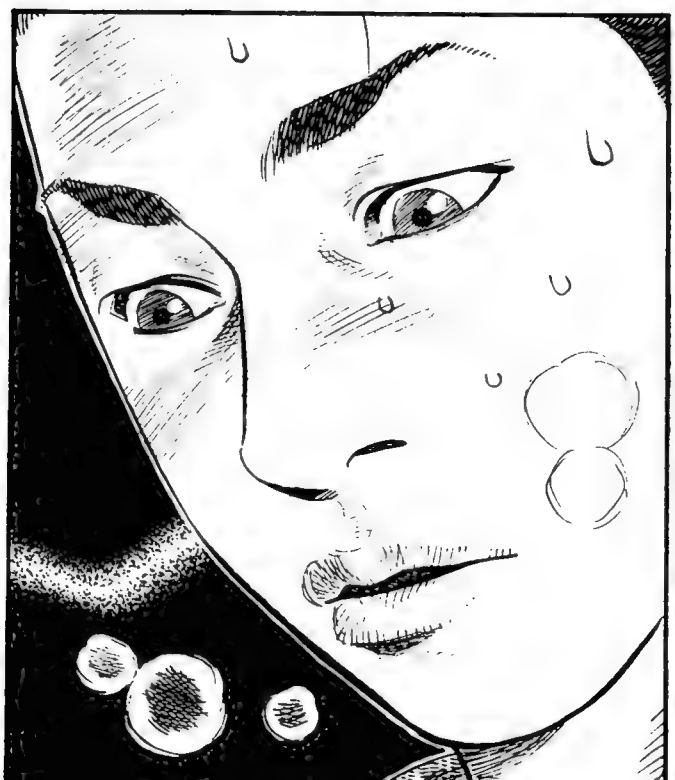


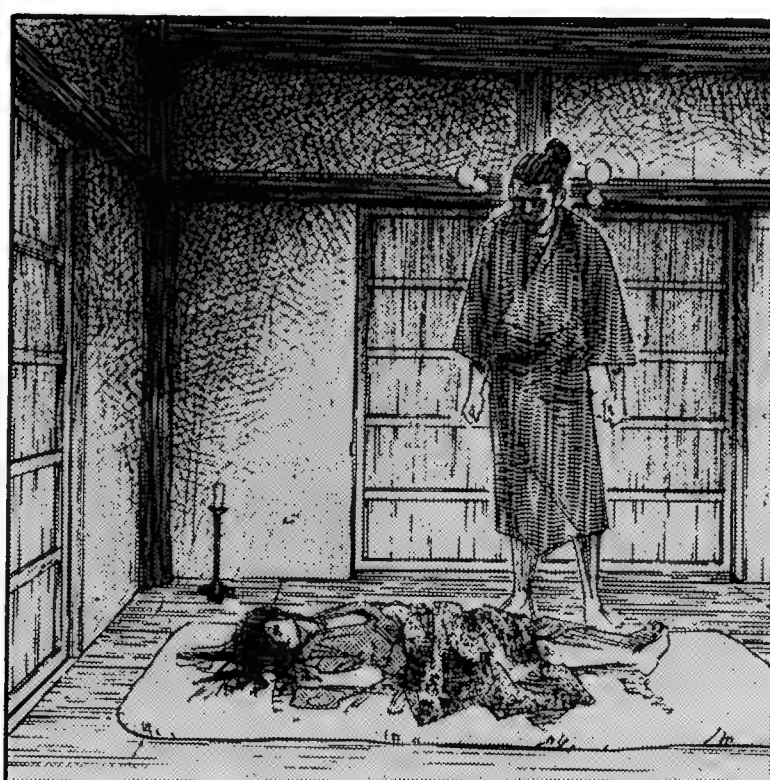



OKŌ...


OKŌ
...!!
I WANT YOU...
...
FOOP

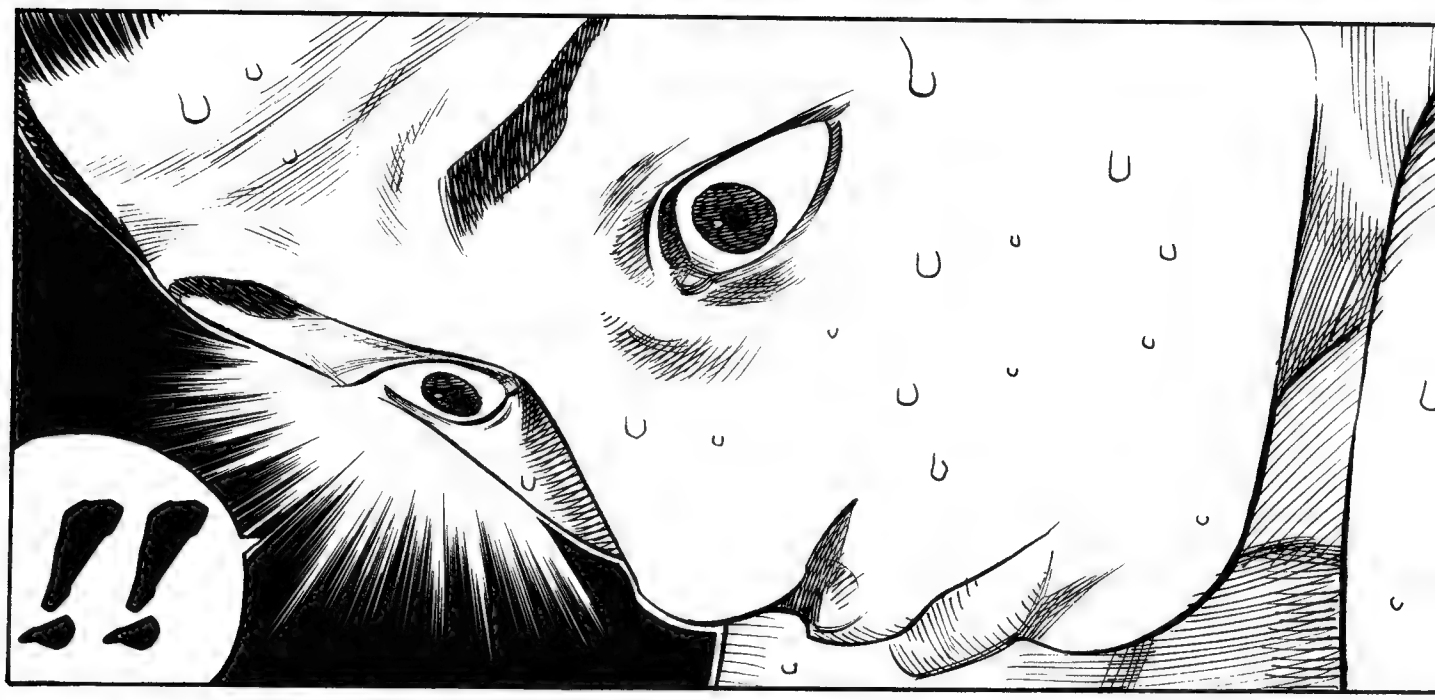







...!!
OKŌ...!!
...


WHICH ONE ARE YOU?


!!


DOES SHE MEAN TAKEZO OR ME?
UR...!! WHICH ONE?


...DOES THAT MEAN SHE WANTS ONE INSTEAD OF THE OTHER...IS THAT IT!?
"WHICH ONE?"...



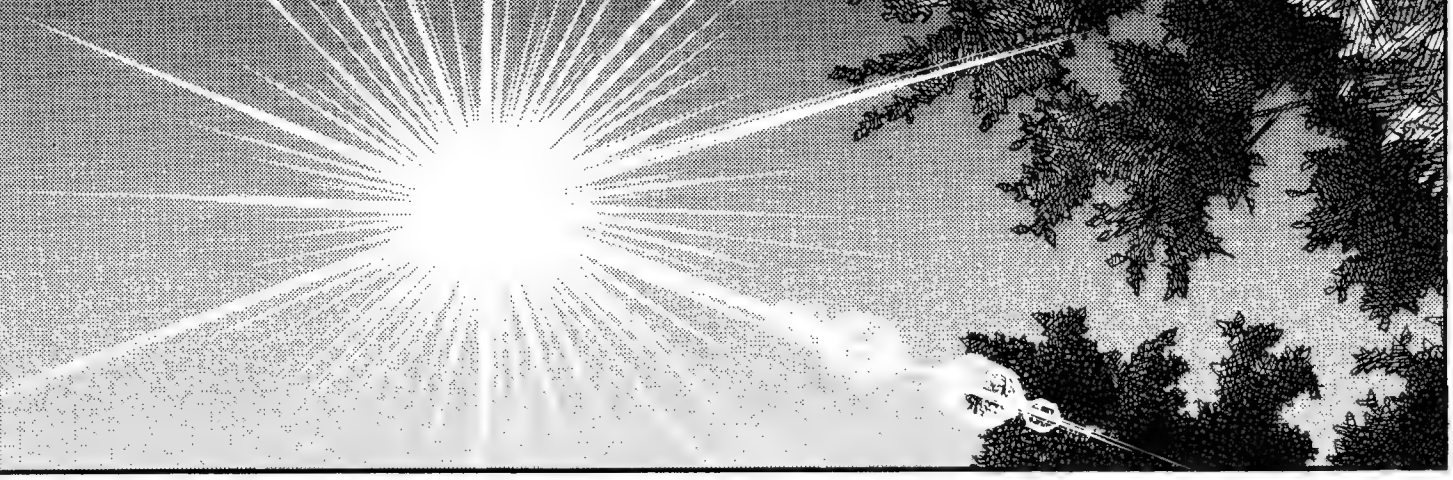

WHAT AM I THINKING!?
I'M AN IDIOT!! I'M BEING AN IDIOT!!
...
I'M BEING STUPID...
FOUR OF THE TSUJIKAZE BANDITS!!
I CUT DOWN FOUR MEN!!
...

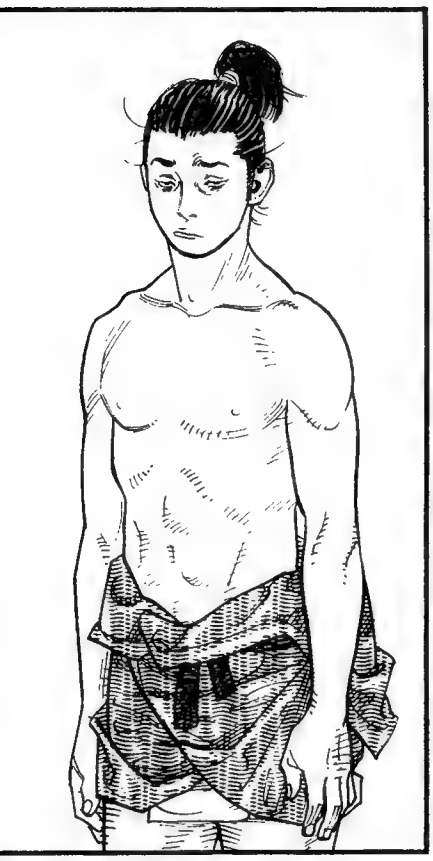

IT'S ME, TAKEZŌ...

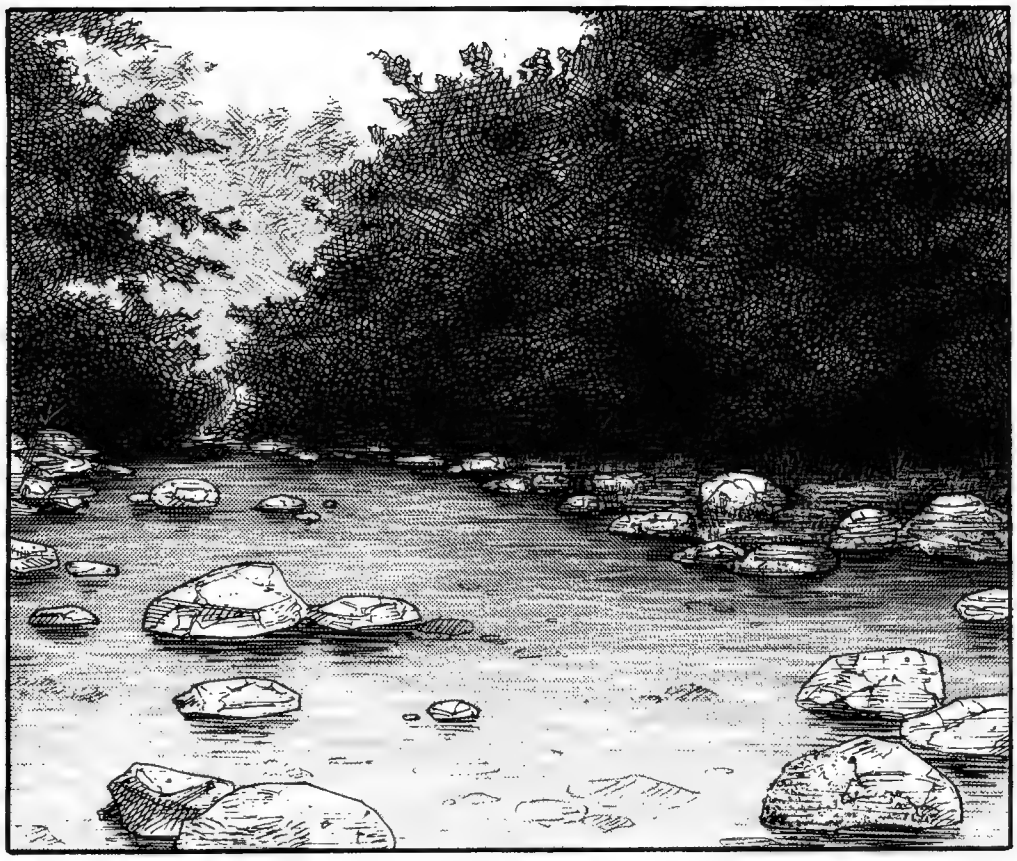

...
HMPH...

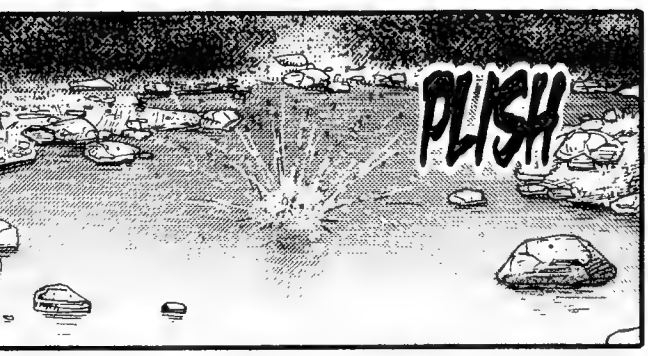

FWP
WHAT DID I JUST SAY!?
WHAT AM I DOING!?
!!
GRB
YOU'RE A BAD BOY.


I THOUGHT YOU HAD A FIANCÉE.







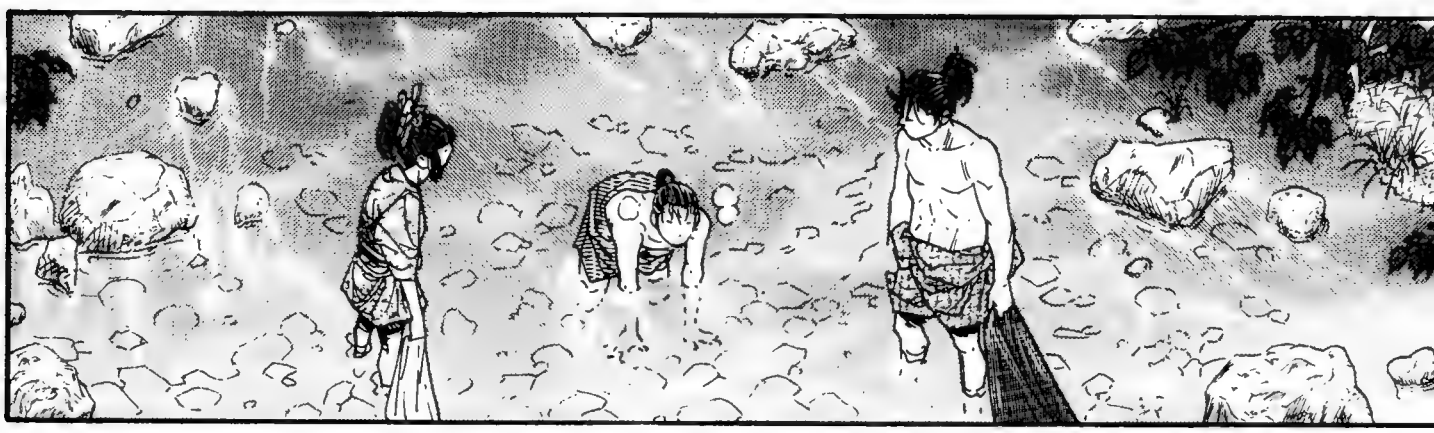

PLISH


WHY DID I USE YOUR NAME..?
I'M SORRY, TAKEZŌ ...




...OR IT WON'T COME OUT.
YOU HAVE TO WASH BLOOD OUT IMMEDI-ATELY...
PLISH
PLISH
...


I'M SORRY...
...OTSU-!!



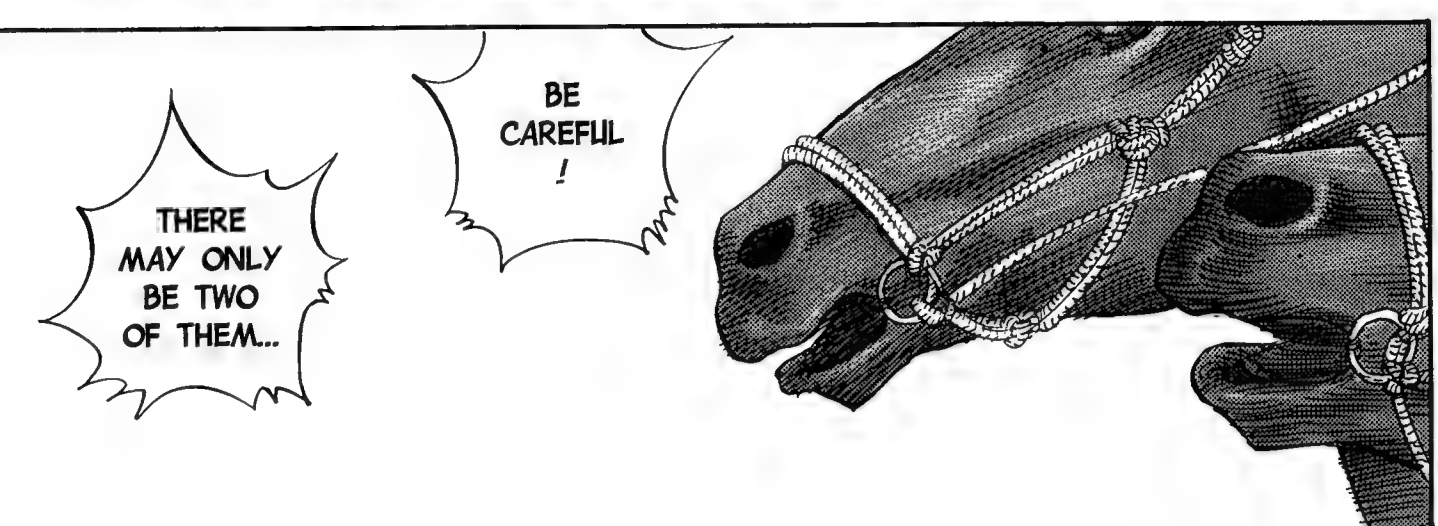



LET'S GO HOME...


...TODAY.


BACK TO MIYAMOTO.

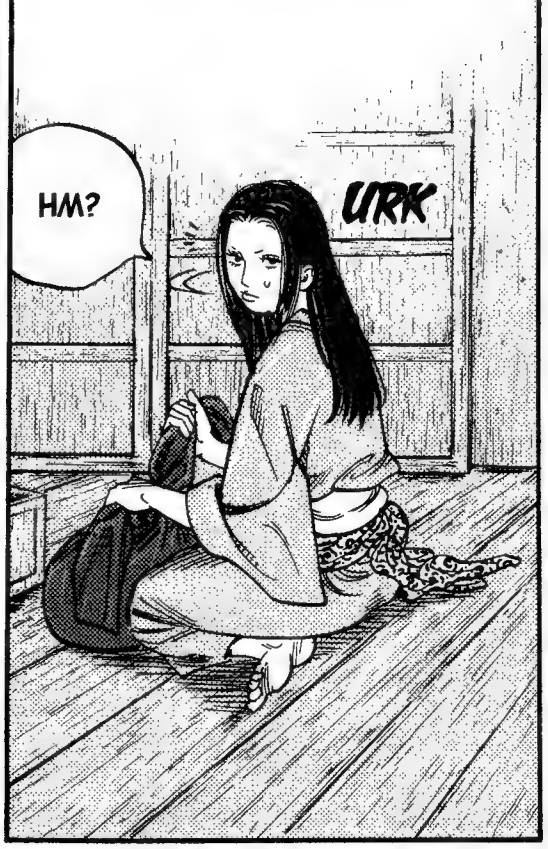

THUD THUD THUD THUD


THERE MAY ONLY BE TWO OF THEM...
BE CAREFUL!


THUD
...BUT THOSE BRATS KILLED THE BOSS!!
THUD
...HAVE SOME FUN WITH OKŌ!!
YEAHH
THUD
...WE CAN...
NOW THAT THE BOSS AIN'T AROUND NO MORE...
HEE HEE...


THUD
I'M FIRST!!
ME TOO!!
ME TOO!!
NO, I AM.
I AM!!
ME TOO.
THUD
ME TOO!!
I'VE BEEN WANTING TO DO HER...
...FOR SO LONG!!


YEAH.
MIYA-
MOTO
VILLAGE
...?


HM?
URK


...OTSŪ.
I
MISS...


WHAT?


...YOU
SHOULD
GO.
YEAH...

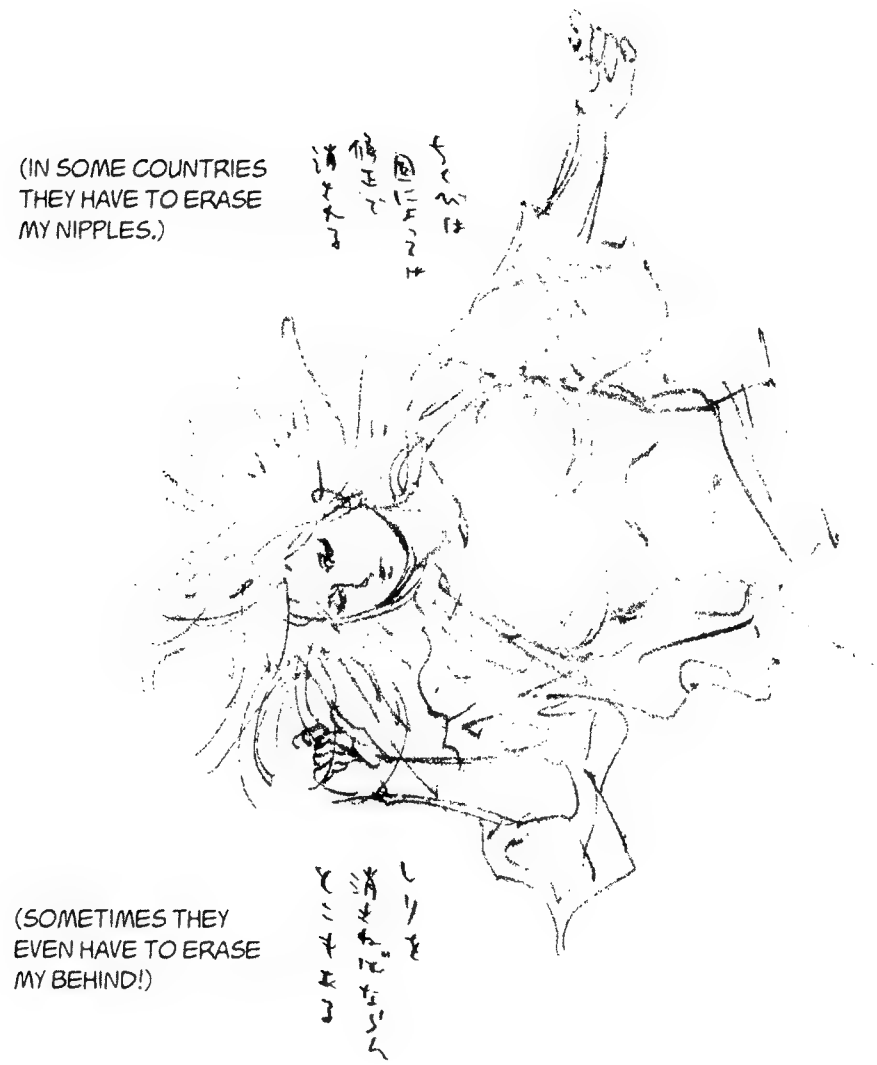

...YOU'RE GOING WITH OKŌ AND AKEMI!?
NAH...
HUH?
YOU'RE NOT GOING HOME...?
DON'T TELL ME...
FROM THIS DAY ON...
I LEFT HOME KNOWING I'D *NEVER* GO BACK.


THUD
THUD
THUD
I'M
A
VAGABOND.


THUD
THUD
AYAHH!


THEY'RE ALREADY HERE...


Vagabond


(IN SOME COUNTRIES THEY HAVE TO ERASE MY NIPPLES.)
(SOMETIMES THEY EVEN HAVE TO ERASE MY BEHIND!)


IT'S TSUJIKAZE'S MEN!!
THEY'RE BACK FOR REVENGE!
!!
YOU STAY HERE.
MOTHER'S BACK AT HOME!
YOU'LL JUST BE IN THE WAY.
WE'LL BRING OKŌ BACK HERE, I PROMISE!
!!
LET'S GO.
I'M GOING, TOO.



#7 Farewell Takezō

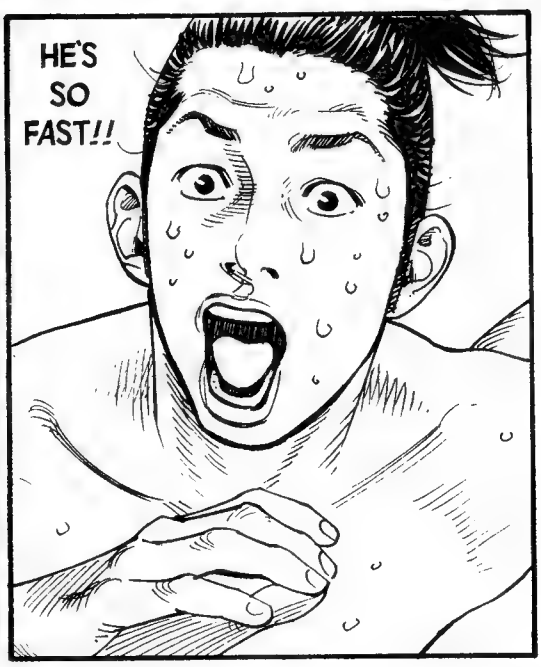

TAKEZŌ ...
I'M GOING TO BE A VAGABOND ...
YOU STAY HERE.
I WANT TO GO WITH YOU...



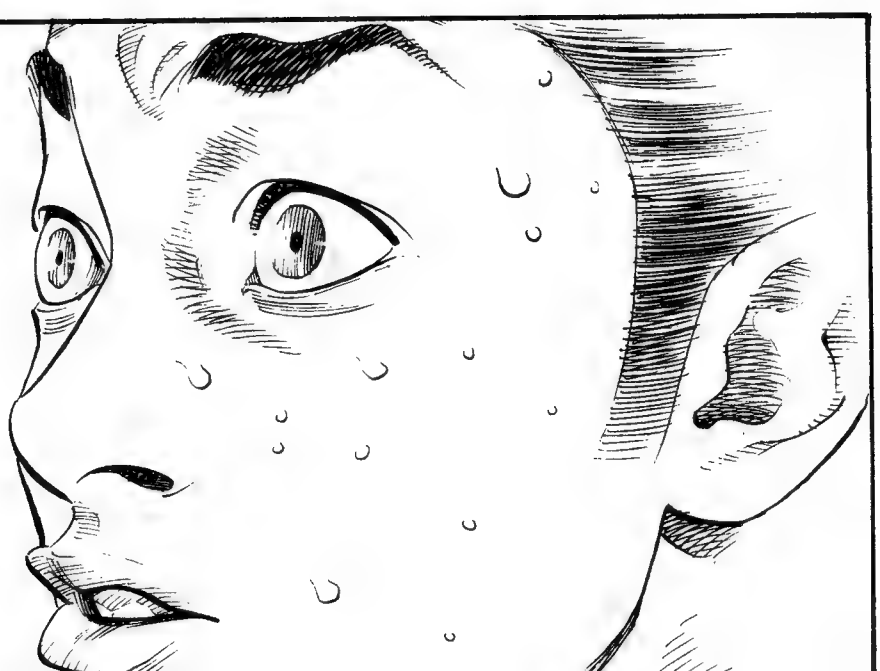








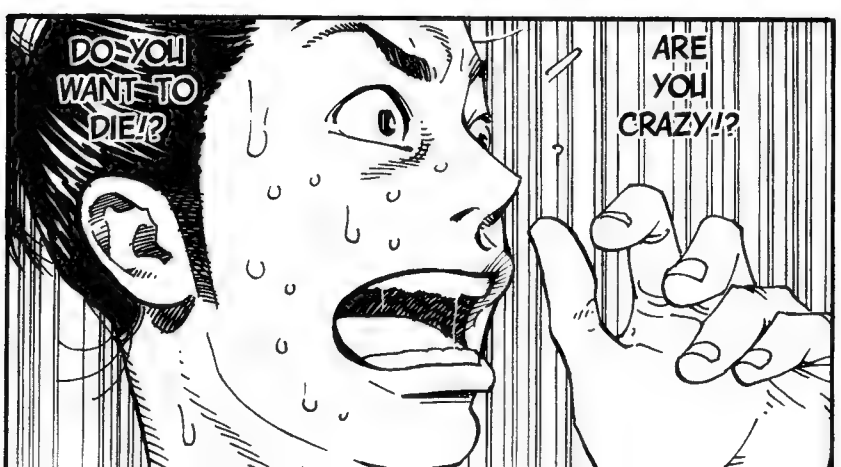
DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE...




!!


YAH
TUMP
!!


H-HOW MANY OF THEM ARE THERE?


DO YOU WANT TO DIE!?
ARE YOU CRAZY!?


ARGH
AIEEE
URGH
MY SWORD ...!!
...I LEFT IT IN THE HOUSE!!
HUH?!


FWUD FWUD
HEEN HEEN


OKŌ!
WHERE IS SHE?
SO YOU'RE THE ONE...
THE KID WHO KILLED THE BOSS!!

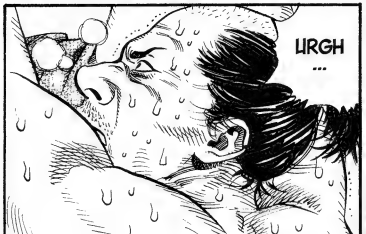

WE GOTTA KILL HIM OFF BEFORE WORD GETS AROUND!!
DIE!
TENMA LET HIS GUARD DOWN 'CAUSE HE WAS TOO CRAZY ABOUT OKŌ.
HOW'D THIS BRAT KILL TSUJIKAZE TENMA, LEADER OF THREE HUNDRED BANDITS?
HE'S PUT A STAIN ON OUR REPUTATION.
HE KILLED THE BOSS...?
HE'S JUST A KID.


FWISH
YOUR SIDE IS WIDE OPEN!!


AIEE


KSHUNK
!!


WHMP

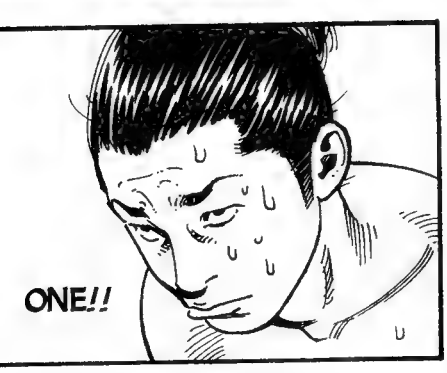

URGH ...


AYAHHH!

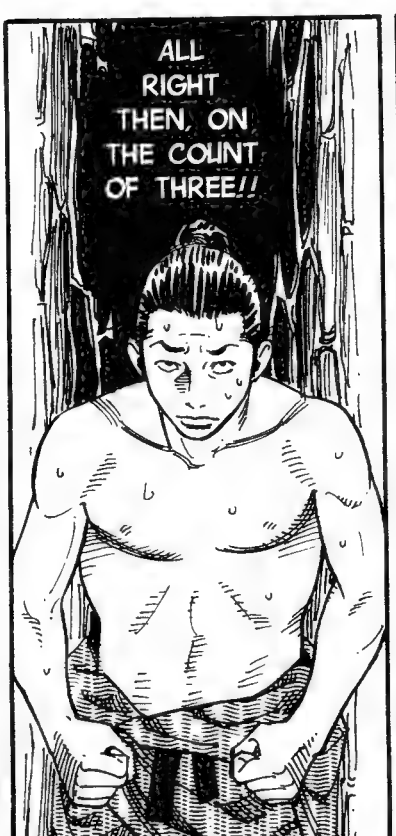

WHAT AM I DOING !?
HUF
HUF
HUF
WHAT AM I DOING JUST STANDING HERE!?
JUST TAKE ONE OF THEIR SWORDS!!
THUMP
THUMP
GO AND JOIN HIM!!
THE TSUJIKAZE GANG ARE JUST A BUNCH OF WORMS...
SHUFF
SHUFF
SHUFF

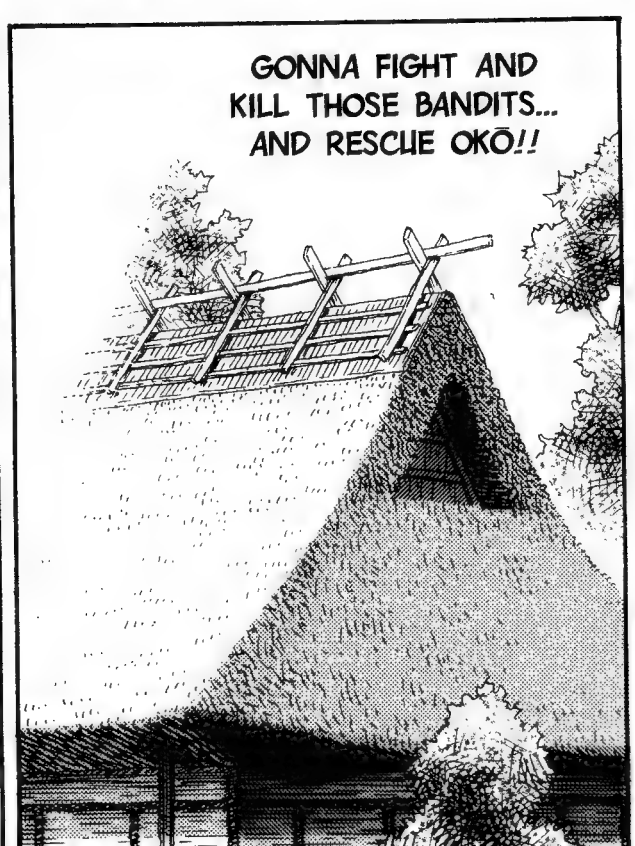

THEY'RE FIGHTING!!
ARGH
AIEE
I KILLED FOUR MEN YESTERDAY!!
COME ON, FACE IT, MATAHACHI!!
IF YOU FALL BEHIND TAKEZO NOW...
...YOU'LL SPEND THE REST OF YOUR LIFE IN HIS SHADOW!!


I'M GOING IN!!
WHY DO I FEEL SO INFERIOR TO MY BEST FRIEND? HE'S THE SAME AGE AND FROM THE SAME VILLAGE AS ME.


ONE!!


TWO!


ALL RIGHT THEN, ON THE COUNT OF THREE!!

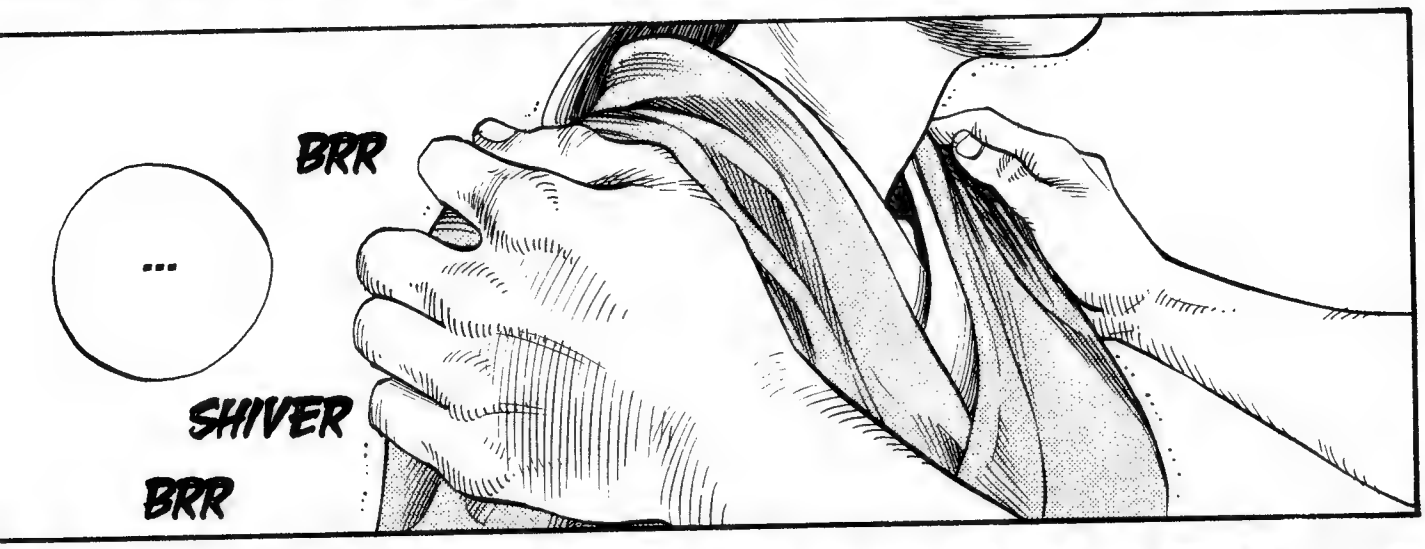

GONNA FIGHT AND KILL THOSE BANDITS... AND RESCUE OKŌ!!


HUH?
MATA-HACHI!
URR...
THREE!!


MATA-HACHI!!
OKŌ!!


HOW'D YOU GET OUT!?
SO YOU'RE SAFE!!


!
I'M GLAD YOU'RE SAFE...
SO I STEPPED OUT AND THEN THEY CAME BUSTING IN...
IT WAS A CLOSE CALL.
I DON'T KNOW WHY BUT I JUST HAD A BAD FEELING.


...
BRR
SHIVER
BRR


DON'T BE MEAN TO ME...


BRR
BRR


SO EVEN YOU... ARE AFRAID?
...


...'CAUSE I KNEW TENMA HAD FEELINGS FOR ME.
I WAS ONLY ABLE TO STAY CALM...


HEY.
WHUD
WHAT–
WHAT ABOUT TAKEZŌ?


ARRGH!!
KSLASH
YOU BASTARD!


UH...
FWWSH!


KUCHIPING
YAHH
!!
FWUP
!!
THUNK


FWOOSH
SHHK


URR...
DON'T RETREAT !!
STAY TOGETHER!! HE CAN'T HANDLE ALL OF US!
WHUD
MATA-HACHI!
OKŌ!
WHERE ARE YOU!?
AIEEE
FWAK
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT!?


THUNK


IF YOU'RE ALIVE, SAY SOME-THING!!
MATAHACHI!
WHUD
SLASH
ACK
ARRGH!
THUNK
WHUD
HUF
HUF





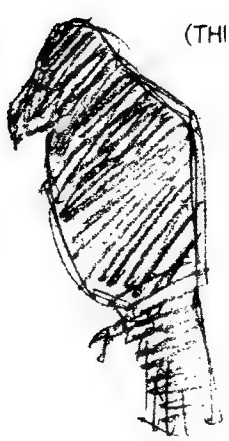

KAW
KAW


KAW
KAW
KAW
...




MATAHACHI
...

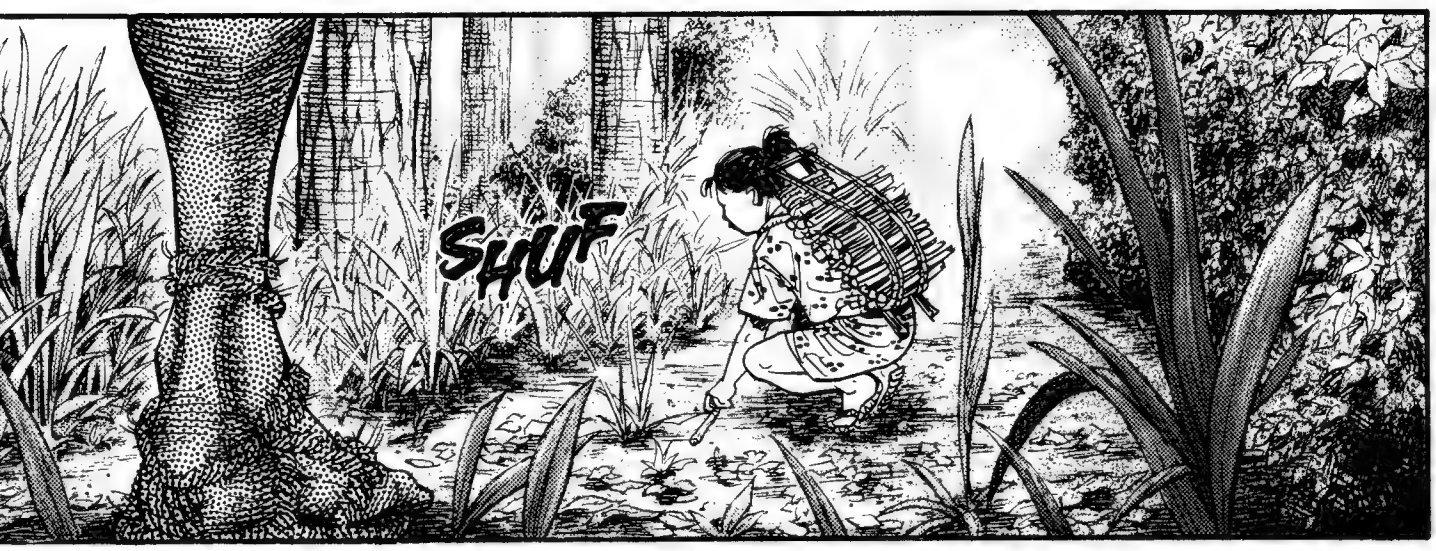

Vagabond



(THICK AND STRONG FORM)

がっしりとした
体型のフォルム




SHUF




GASP!

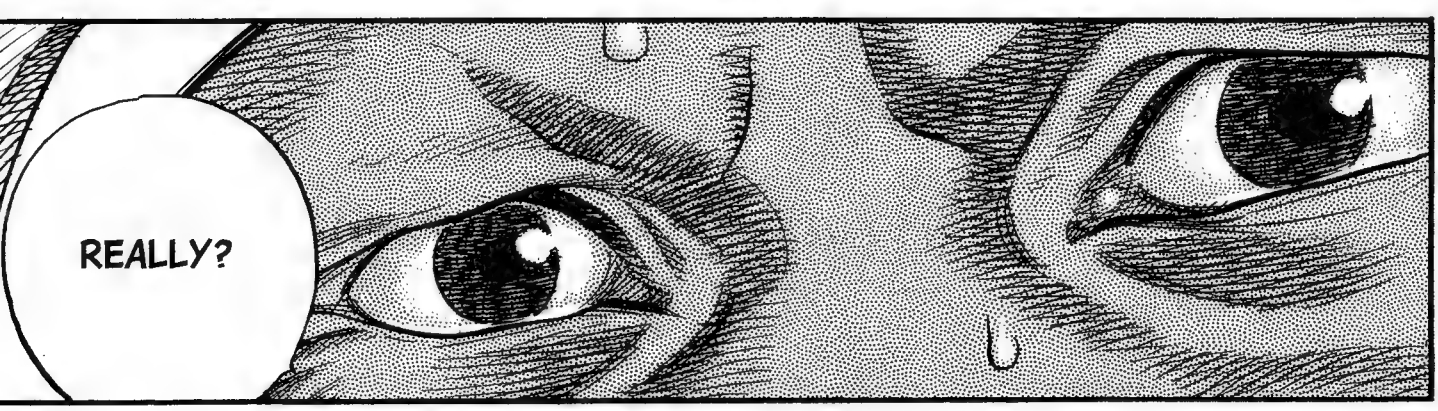


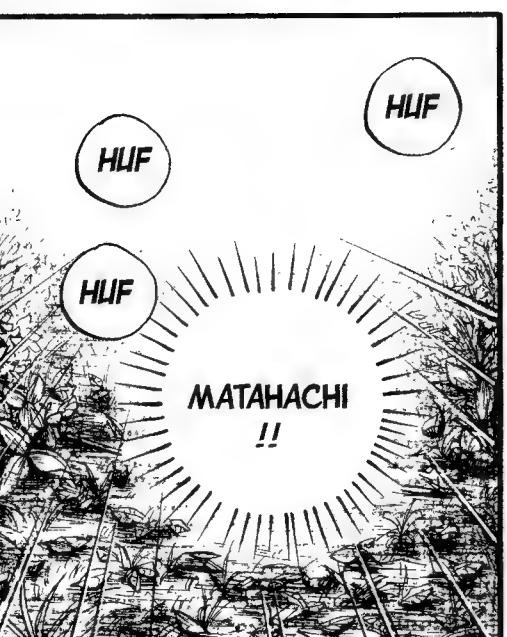

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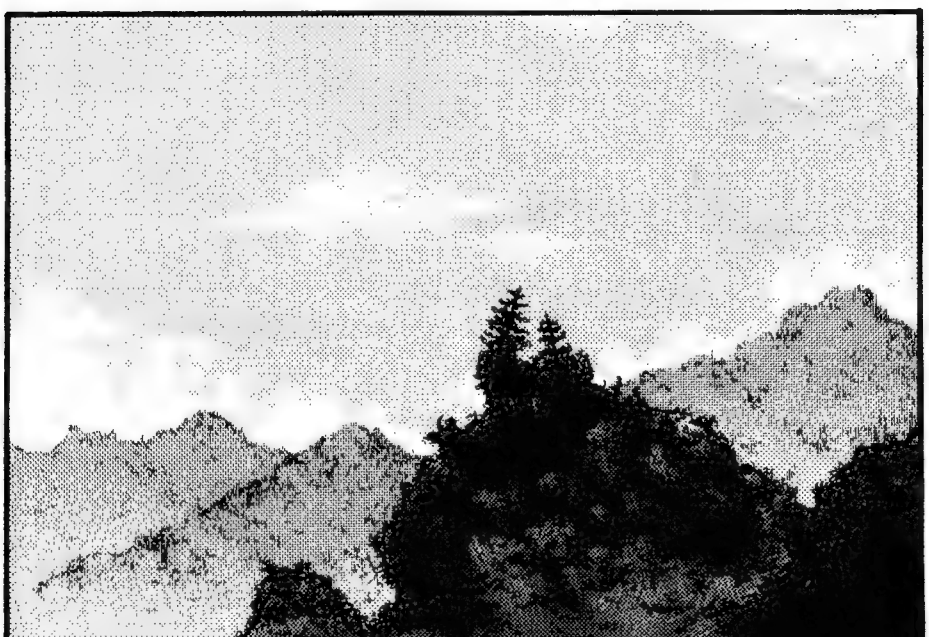

...MATAHACHI'S STILL ALIVE.
GRANNY... OTSŪ...
#8 Miyamoto Village


GRANNY!
HUF HUF
HEITA--
ALREADY FINISHED WITH TODAY'S WORK?
SMAK
!!
FORGET ABOUT WORK! I GOT SOMETHING TO TELL--
HMPH
I SAW...
...SHINMEN TAKEZŌ!
SNIFF
WE, THE HONʼIDEN, ARE THE PROUD DESCENDENTS OF HARD WORKERS!
YOU MUSTNʼT SULLY OUR REPUTATION!!
I ASKED IF YOUʼRE DONE WITH TODAYʼS WORK!!



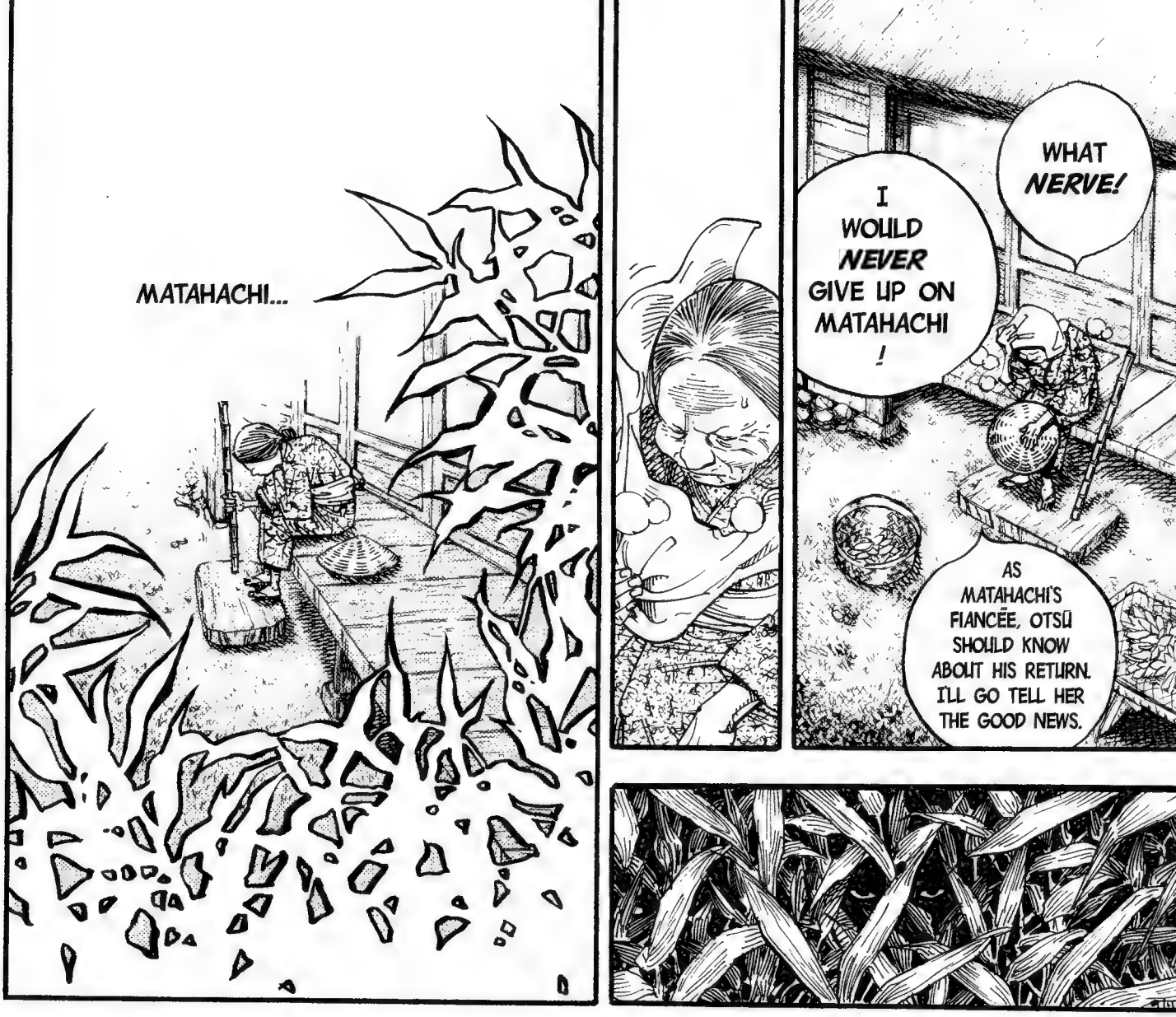

REALLY?

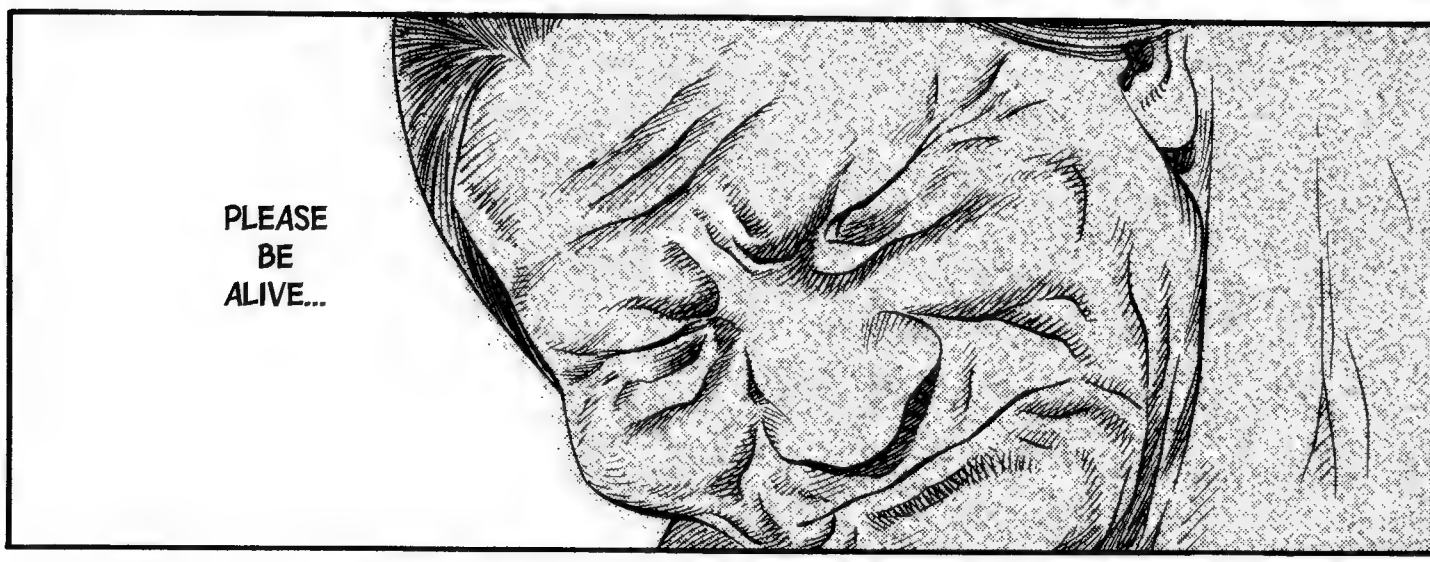

HUF
HUF
HUF
MATAHACHI
!!




HUF
HUF
HUF
MATAHACHI
!!
NOPE...
NAH...
?
HUF
HAS MATAHACHI RETURNED
!?
HUF
HUF
HUF
...!!
GRANNY
...
...MAYBE YOU SHOULD GIVE UP ON MATAHACHI...
IT'S BEEN ALMOST A YEAR NOW.
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, BUT
...


WH-WHAT... WAS THAT FOR...
I WAS JUST--
!!
FWAK
THAT MEANS MY MATAHACHI MUST BE BACK TOO!!
SHINMEN TAKEZŌ WHO WENT OFF TO WAR WITH MATAHACHI HAS COME HOME...!!
HEY! WATCH OUT!
FWISH
FWISH
THWAK
FIND THEM!!
GO FIND THEM!!
WHAT!? SHINMEN TAKEZŌ...!!


MATAHACHI...
I WOULD NEVER GIVE UP ON MATAHACHI!
WHAT NERVE!
AS MATAHACHI'S FIANCÉE, OTSŪ SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HIS RETURN. I'LL GO TELL HER THE GOOD NEWS.


PLEASE BE ALIVE...


...HE WOULD HAVE BEEN MARRIED BY NOW. HE WOULD HAVE BEEN A RESPECTABLE HEIR TO THE HONʻIDEN FAMILY.
IF SHINMEN TAKEZŌ HADNʻT DRAGGED HIM OFF TO WAR...

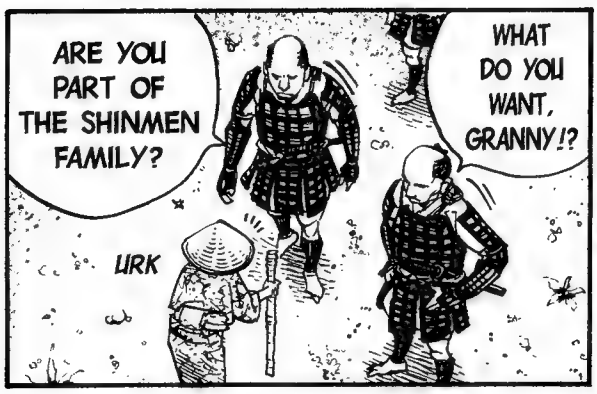

DON'T TELL ME...
...YOU SNUCK BACK HERE *WITHOUT* MATAHACHI!
THAT BASTARD ...!


SHUF
I'LL JUST HAVE TO PAY THE SHINMEN FAMILY A VISIT!!
KRICH
KRICH


THOSE SAMURAI DON'T LOOK FAMILIAR ...
KRICH
KRICH






ARE YOU PART OF THE SHINMEN FAMILY?
WHAT DO YOU WANT, GRANNY!?
URK

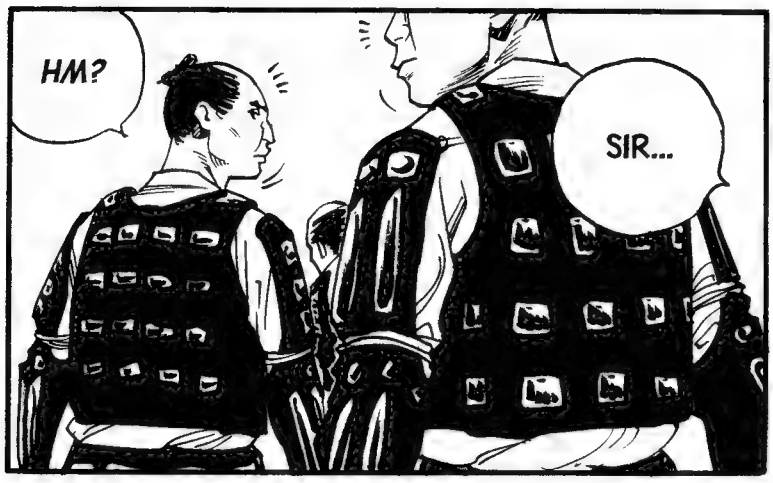

I'M THE RETIRED HEAD OF THE GENTRY ACROSS THE RIVER.
FIP
HEAVENS, NO!!
AND WHAT BRINGS YOU MEN HERE ?
FIP


NOT HERE!!
LOOKS LIKE HE HASN'T COME HOME YET!!
WHERE'S HE HIDING!?
HM...?


YES.
...!!
H-
HE'S...
...NOT WITH MY SON? HIS NAME IS HONIDEN MATAHACHI.
HM?
NO, HE'S ALONE.
IS--
IS HE ALONE?
WE'RE AFTER A MAN NAMED TAKEZŌ!!
!!
DID HE DO SOMETHING WRONG?
HE BROKE THROUGH THE GATES AT THE PROVINCE BORDER.
HE'S ALREADY KILLED TWO OF OUR MEN.
WE ALSO KNOW THAT HE WAS ONE OF IIKITA'S MEN.
THAT GOOD FOR NOTHING TAKEZO...


YOU MEN STAY HERE...
...JUST IN CASE HE SHOWS UP.
LET'S GO.
THAT TAKEZŌ'S TO BLAME FOR DRAGGING MATAHACHI OFF TO WAR!!

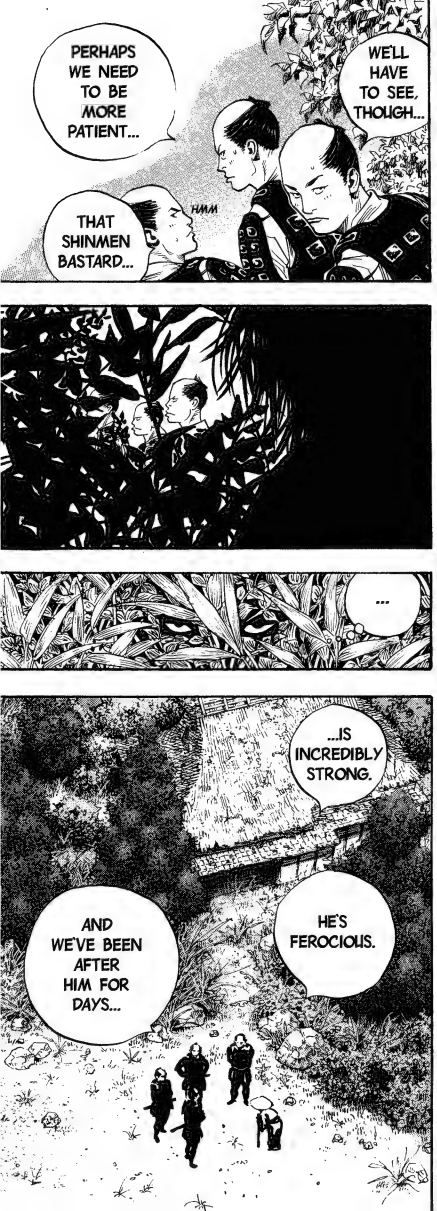

HOW ABOMINABLE!!
HE REALLY DID SNEAK BACK HERE BY HIMSELF.
SO YOUR SON FOUGHT IN THE BATTLE OF SEKIGAHARA?
IT'S UNFORTUNATE, BUT YOU SHOULD FORGET ABOUT HIM.


HM?
SIR...


WHAT'S THAT?


I DOUBT THAT YOU WILL HAVE AN EASY TIME...
...OF CAPTURING THAT BASTARD, TAKEZŌ.


IF WE DON'T FIND HIM BY DUSK, WE'LL BE STUCK HERE FOR A WHILE.
YEAH ...
KRICH
KRICH
I DON'T WANT TO BE STUCK IN THIS VILLAGE.
SHUF
SHUF
SHUF
...
...
...
WILL YOU...
...HEED THE ADVICE OF AN OLD WOMAN?


PERHAPS WE NEED TO BE MORE PATIENT...
WE'LL HAVE TO SEE, THOUGH...
HMM
THAT SHINMEN BASTARD...
...
...IS INCREDIBLY STRONG.
HE'S FEROCIOUS.
AND WE'VE BEEN AFTER HIM FOR DAYS...


THAT CAN'T BE TRUE...
WHAT ?
AT THE AGE OF THIRTEEN !?
BUT IT IS.
HIS OPPONENT WAS A SEASONED MARTIAL ARTIST.
AND TAKEZŌ BEAT HIM TO A PULP.
AT THE AGE OF THIRTEEN ...
...THAT BASTARD KILLED A FULL GROWN MAN.
...WITHOUT MUCH SUCCESS.
THAT'S NOT SURPRIS-ING.
IN THE END HE DRAGGED MY DEAR SON OFF TO WAR...
TAKEZŌ'S WICKED WAYS ONLY GOT WORSE.
OUCH.
TUGG
LEND ME YOUR EAR.
...
HM...
...
HOW COULD HE HAVE SURVIVED AND NOT MY MATAHACHI?
...


AHH!
ANOTHER BODY!
TAKEZŌ'S DONE IT AGAIN!
THE BODY'S STILL WARM!!
TAKEZŌ MUST BE NEARBY!!
A BODY ...?
HOW SCARY...
FWICH


OTSŪ.
KRCH


KYAAA!


OVER THERE!!
HEY!!


UH...
WAS IT HIM!?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT!?


...
EWICH


URK
UH...


TA--
FWICHH
OVER THERE!!
STOP!!
TAKEZŌ?


Vagabond


(OH, MATAHACHI!)
えーっ


SHIPPŌJI TEMPLE
...HE WILL CONTINUE TO ELUDE YOUR MEN.
HE'LL FEED ON BIRDS, RABBITS, OR EVEN TREE BARK. WHATEVER IT TAKES...
...HE'S A BEAST!
HE WAS AN ODD CHILD WHO SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME IN THE MOUNTAINS! IN OTHER WORDS...
IT'S NO WONDER YOU CAN'T CAPTURE TAKEZŌ.
HMPH.
...HE'S OUT OF HUMAN REACH.
ONCE A BEAST ESCAPES INTO THE MOUNTAINS ...

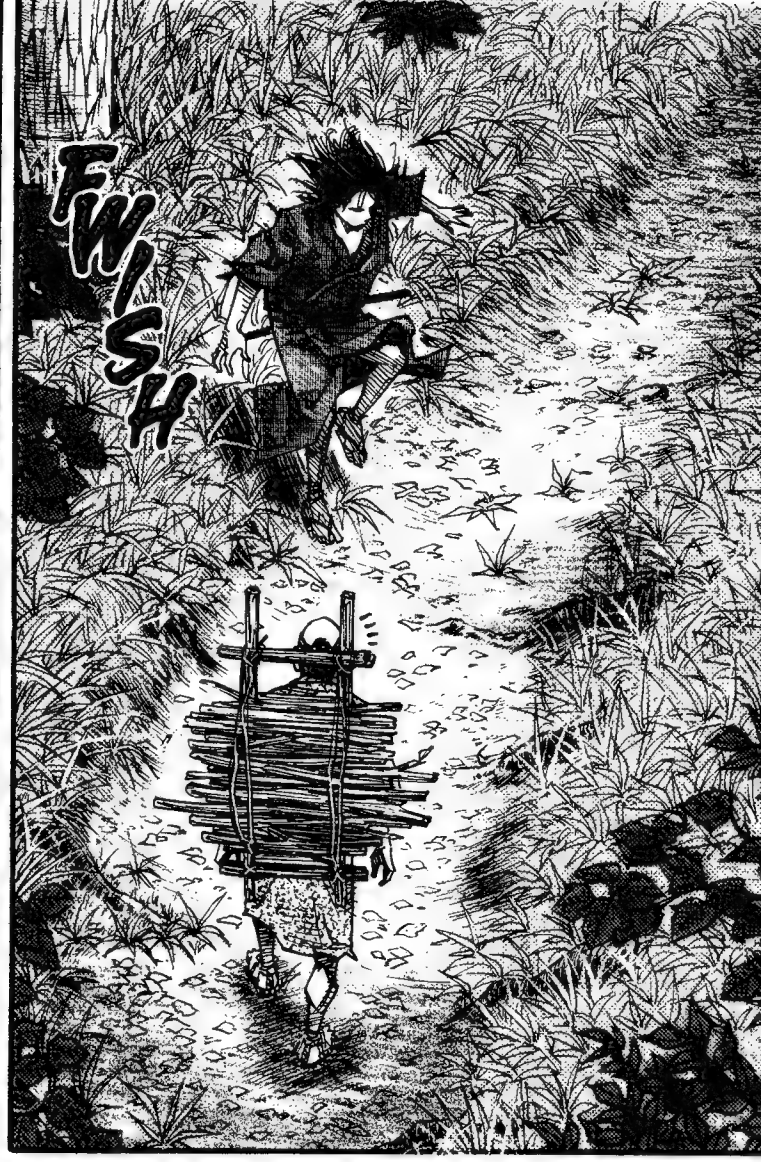

PHEW.
!!
FSH
FSH
...
THE VILLAGERS ARE AFTER ME, TOO...?


KRNCH KRNCH
MNCH MNCH
MNCH MNCH

#9 Fiancée


ULP!!




FWISH

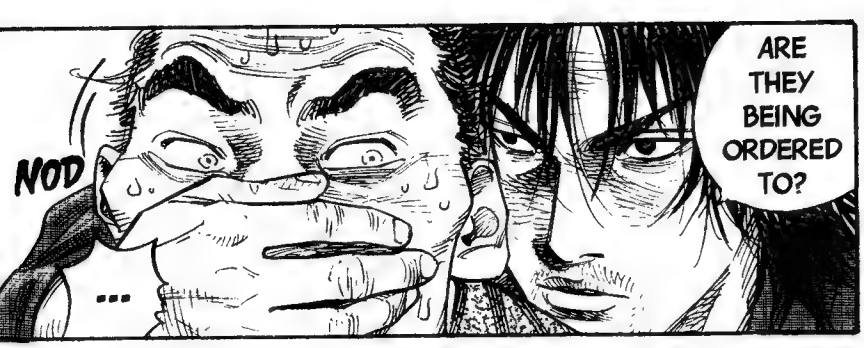

RELAY THAT MESSAGE TO GRANNY AND OTSŪ.
TELL THEM THAT AND I'LL LEAVE THE VILLAGE.
ULP
ULP
THAT'S ALL I WANT.


MATAHACHI'S STILL ALIVE.


BRR
SHI-SHI-SHIN...
BRR
BRR
TA-TA-...


...
...
...
KRAK
URR--


FWICH
FWICH


NOD
...
ARE THEY BEING ORDERED TO?


...


THEY'RE AFTER ME?
...
NOD
WHY ARE THE VILLAGERS HELPING THE SOLDIERS?


I'M COUNTING ON YOU.
NNGH!
THUNK
!!
TELL GRANNY HON'IDEN AND OTSŪ OF SHIPPŌJI TEMPLE...
...MATAHACHI'S STILL ALIVE.
BUT...
BUT HE'S NOT COMING BACK TO MIYAMOTO.
GIVE THEM THE MESSAGE.
...WITH A WOMAN.
...I CAN'T SAY HE TOOK OFF...


IT'S TAKEZŌ!! HE'S OVER HERE!!
TD
TD
TD
HUF
HUF
HUF
WHUD
!!
GO!!
HUF
HUF
HUF
SHF


MY NAME IS OSUGI.
...I AM THE MOTHER OF HONIDEN MATA-HACHI WHO, AFTER BEING LURED OFF TO WAR BY THAT DESPICABLE TAKEZŌ...
...HAS NOT RETURNED HOME.


ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF...


HMM?
HMM?

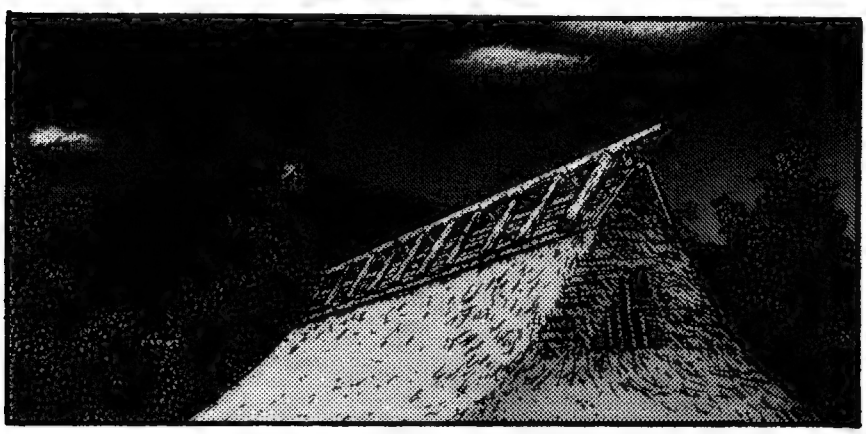

AND YOU?
HUH ?


I'M OTSŪ.
MMBL
OTSŪ!
BE MORE POLITE!!


HMM?
HMM?
I CAN'T STAND HIS EYES.
SHE FEELS THE SAME HATRED TOWARDS TAKEZŌ AS I DO!!
SHE IS MY SON'S FIANCÉE.
DON'T YOU, OTSŪ?
OKAY.
NOT "OKAY"!
NOT "UH"!
UH...
SAY, YES!
DON'T YOU?
DON'T YOU!?
...


PLEASE EXCUSE OTSŪ. SHE'S AN ORPHAN WHO DIDN'T HAVE ANYONE TO TEACH HER PROPER MANNERS.
EVEN THOUGH SHE'S SEVENTEEN, SHE'S NO IDEA HOW THE WORLD WORKS!


YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GROW UP IF YOU'RE GOING TO BECOME A BRIDE OF THE HON'IDEN FAMILY!!
YES, MA'AM.
KRIND



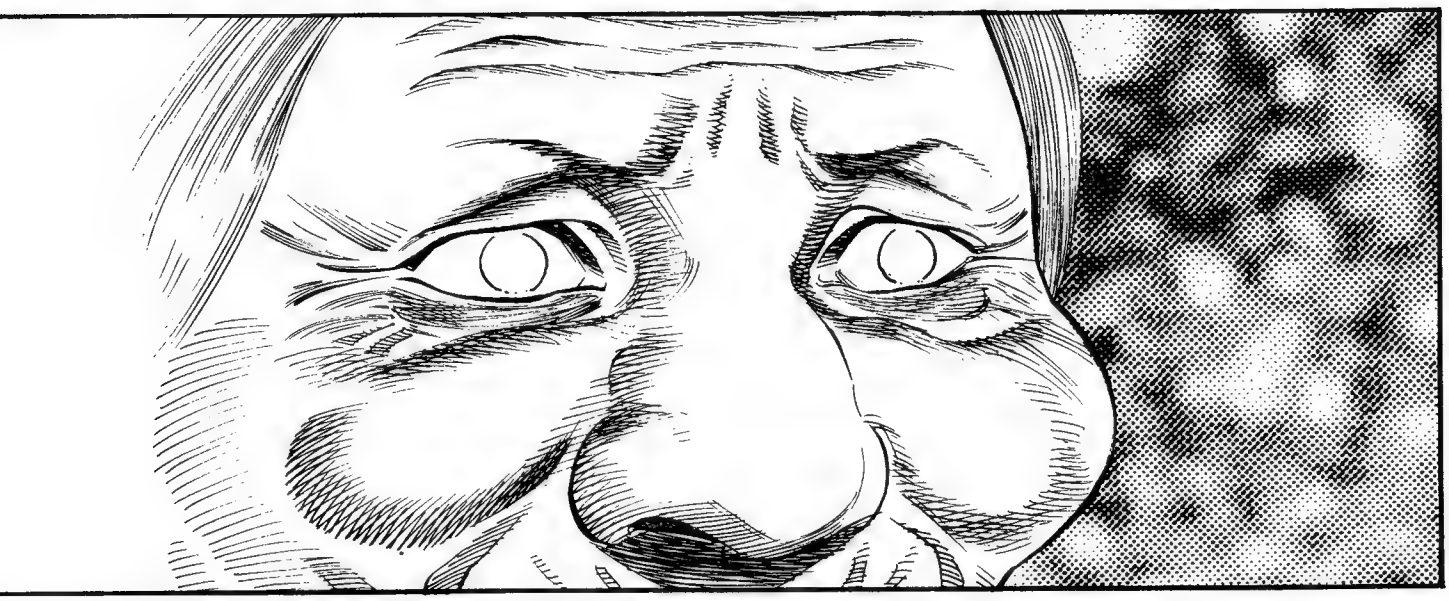



MMBL
MMBL
MMBL
MMBL
MMBL


YOU HAVEN'T DIED, HAVE YOU!?
YOU *MUST* BE ALIVE!!
URR.
ZHOOP
OH, MATAHACHI!!
MATAHACHI!?
MATAHACHI...
MATA-HACHI!?


MOTHER
!!

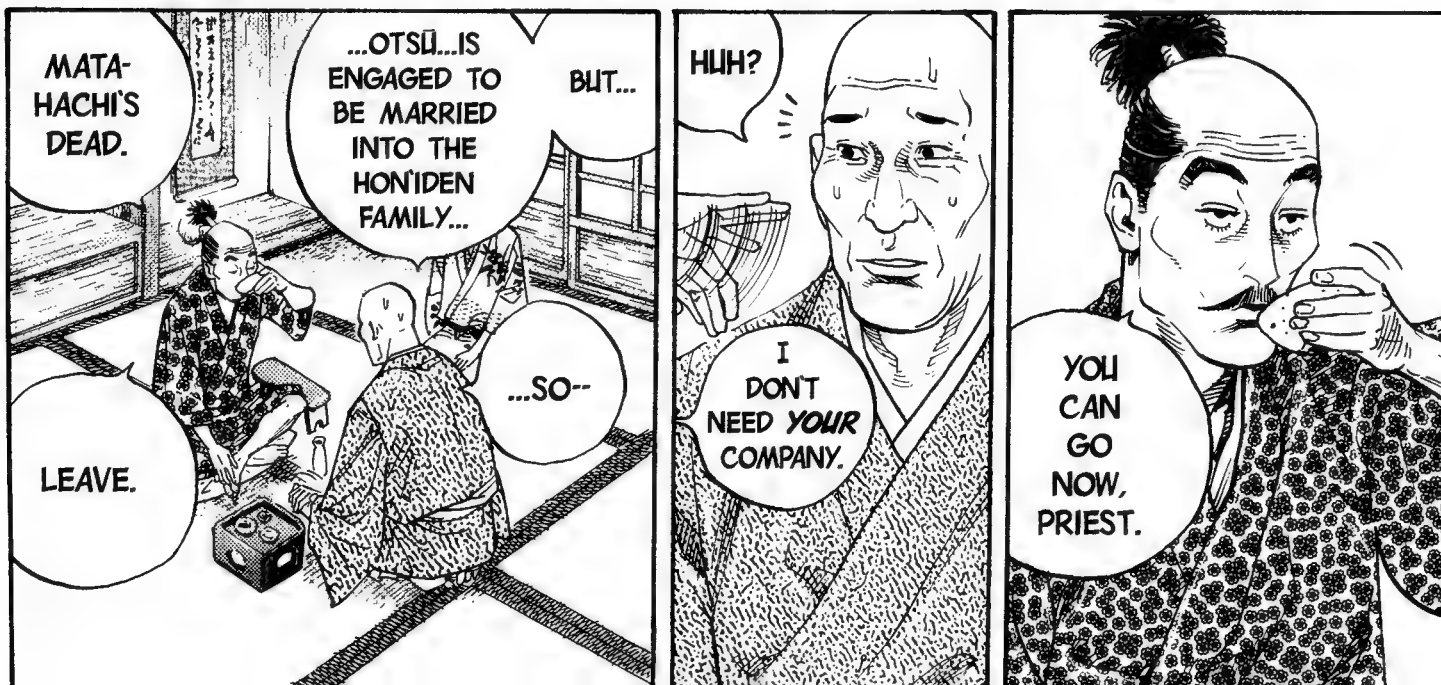

GRANNY...

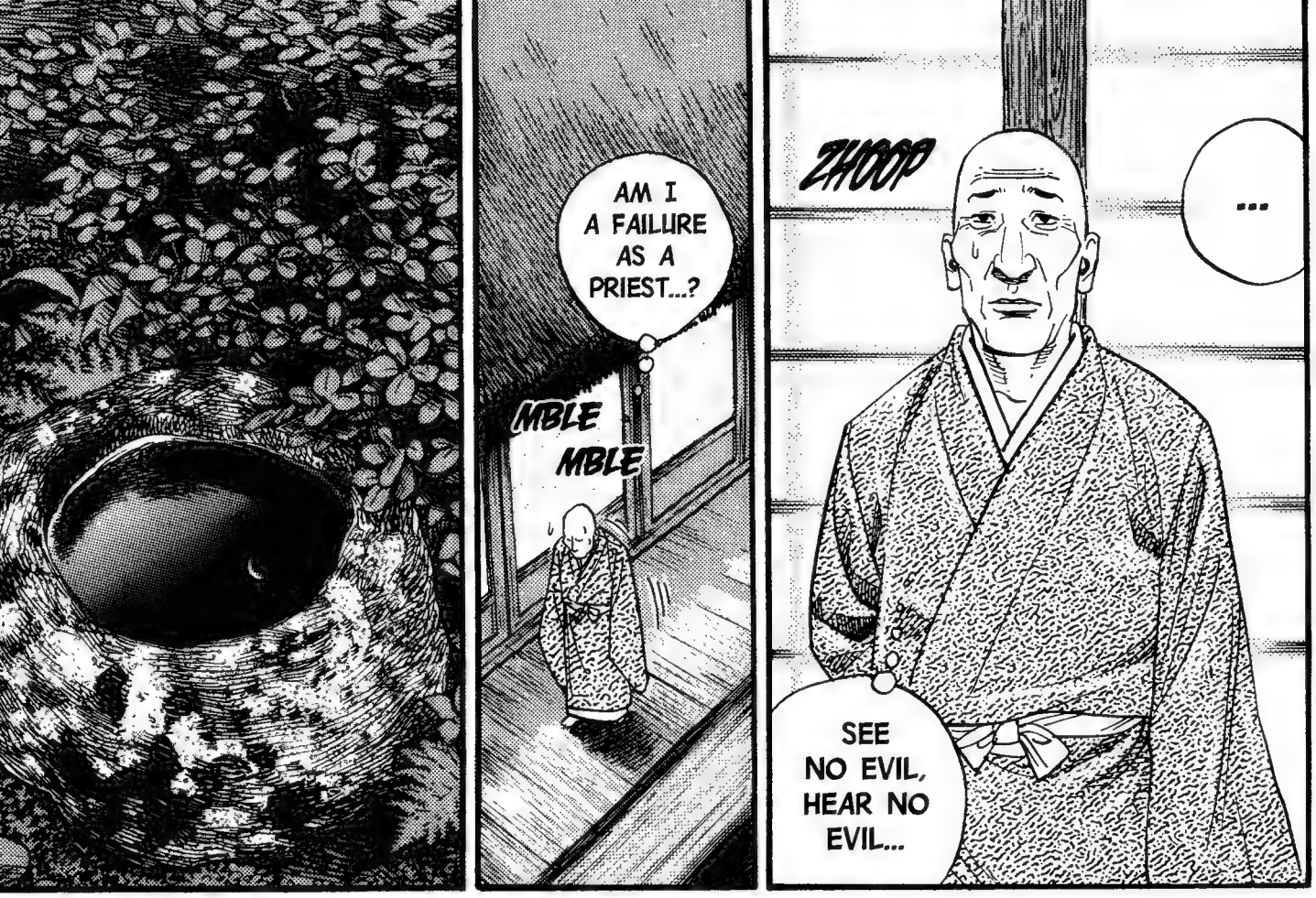



GRANNY...
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF


WHAT!?
OTSŪ, MY DEAR, THIS MAN MATAHACHI ...
FWIP
...
PROBABLY DIED ON THE BATTLE-FIELD.
OTSŪ... WHY DON'T YOU POUR SOME SAKE...
...
...FOR OUR GUEST, CAPTAIN AOKI?

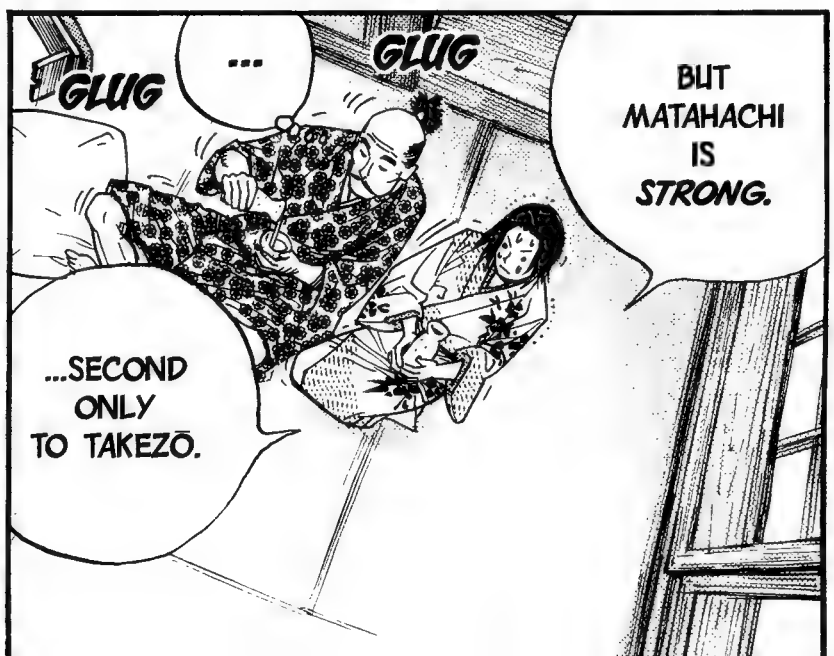

OTSŪ, YOU'RE BEING RUDE!!
URK
WITH ONE HAND!?
FSH
SURE.


MATA-HACHI'S DEAD.
...OTSŪ...IS ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED INTO THE HON'IDEN FAMILY...
BUT...
...SO--
LEAVE.
HUH?
I DON'T NEED YOUR COMPANY.
YOU CAN GO NOW, PRIEST.


AM I A FAILURE AS A PRIEST...?
MBLE MBLE
ZHOOP
...
SEE NO EVIL, HEAR NO EVIL...


SSIP
FICH
...
MEN PERISH EASILY IN WAR.
ALL THE MORE SO IF MATAHACHI WAS JUST A FOOT SOLDIER, HIS ONLY WEAPON A SPEAR.


FWIP
EVEN THIS *TAKEZO* WILL EVENTUALLY BE APPREHENDED AND KILLED BY MY MEN.
YOU MUST ACCEPT IT, MATAHACHI'S DEAD.


GLUG
...
GLUG
BUT MATAHACHI IS *STRONG*.
...SECOND ONLY TO TAKEZŌ.


KYAAA!
OTSŪ!
TUGG
SO HOW ABOUT IT!? YOU AND ME!!
FWUD
AIEE!!
!?
THOK
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
UH-OH...
THIS ISN'T GOOD.
UR.
WHUD


I'M MATAHACHI'S FIANCÉE.
I'M GOING TO MARRY INTO THE HON'IDEN FAMILY!!
IT'S ALREADY BEEN DECIDED!!
TNK


OH MATAHACHI... MATAHACHI-!?
YUK! THAT WAS SCARY. AND GROSS.


FORGIVE ME, OTSŪ.


HEY!!
OTSŪ.
TUMP
TUMP


I CAN'T REMEMBER MATAHACHI'S FACE...
HUH...?
QUIET! I'M TRYING TO REMEMBER!!
FORGIVE ME, OTSŪ... THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO.
FOR ME?
A COURIER DELIVERED THIS TODAY.
A LETTER?
I HELD IT FOR YOU.
MATAHACHI, PLEASE COME HOME SOON.
WHY ...?
OTSŪ.


GRANNY...
I CAME HERE TO TELL YOU...
WHO WOULD SEND A LETTER TO AN ORPHAN LIKE ME?




MATA-
HACHI'S--



!!
FWISH


I'LL
KILL *YOU*
AND THEN
I CAN
DIE!


...!?

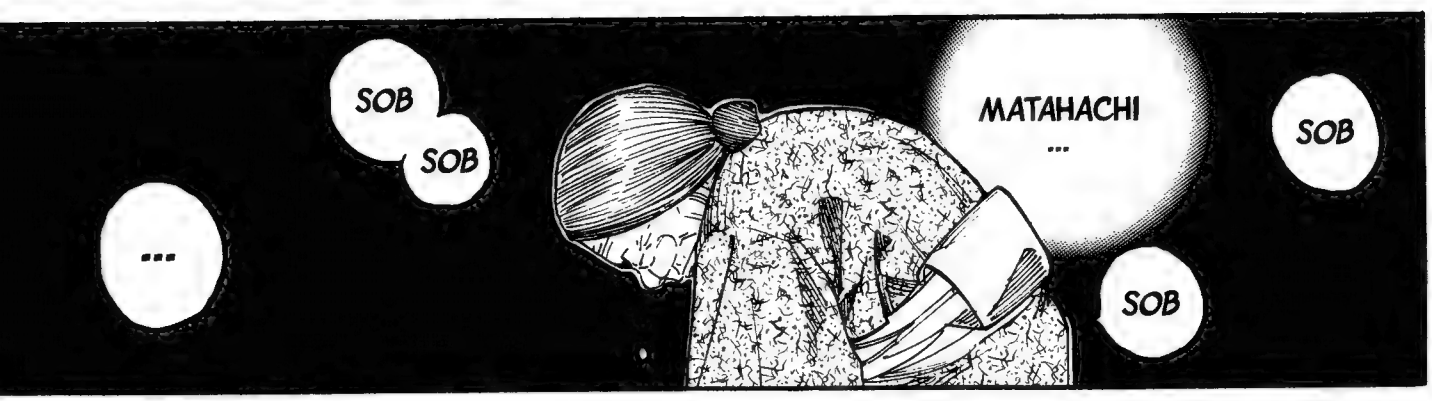

I'LL KILL MYSELF AFTER KILLING YOU!!
!?
FWISH
EEYAAH!
MATAHACHI'S STILL ALIVE!!
THAT'S WHAT I CAME TO TELL YOU.
!!



#10 Left Behind


IS IT TRUE, TAKEZŌ?
DO YOU SWEAR IT'S TRUE?
SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO--
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, GRANNY?
...

BUT--
YEAH ...


SOB
SOB
...
MATAHACHI ...
SOB
SOB




THEN WHY DIDN'T HE COME BACK HOME?


DRAGGED HIM OFF?
WHY DIDN'T HE COME BACK!?
THIS IS ALL WRONG.
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO DRAGGED HIM OFF, AND YOU END UP RETURNING...
GIVE HIM BACK TO ME!!
GIVE MATAHACHI BACK TO ME!!
WHERE IS HE!?
URK
HOW DARE YOU SNEAK BACK HOME ALONE!?
...
THMP
THMP
ARRGH!
THMP
TAKEZŌ!! BRING MATAHACHI BACK HERE TO HIS MOTHER!
BRING HIM HERE!
URR

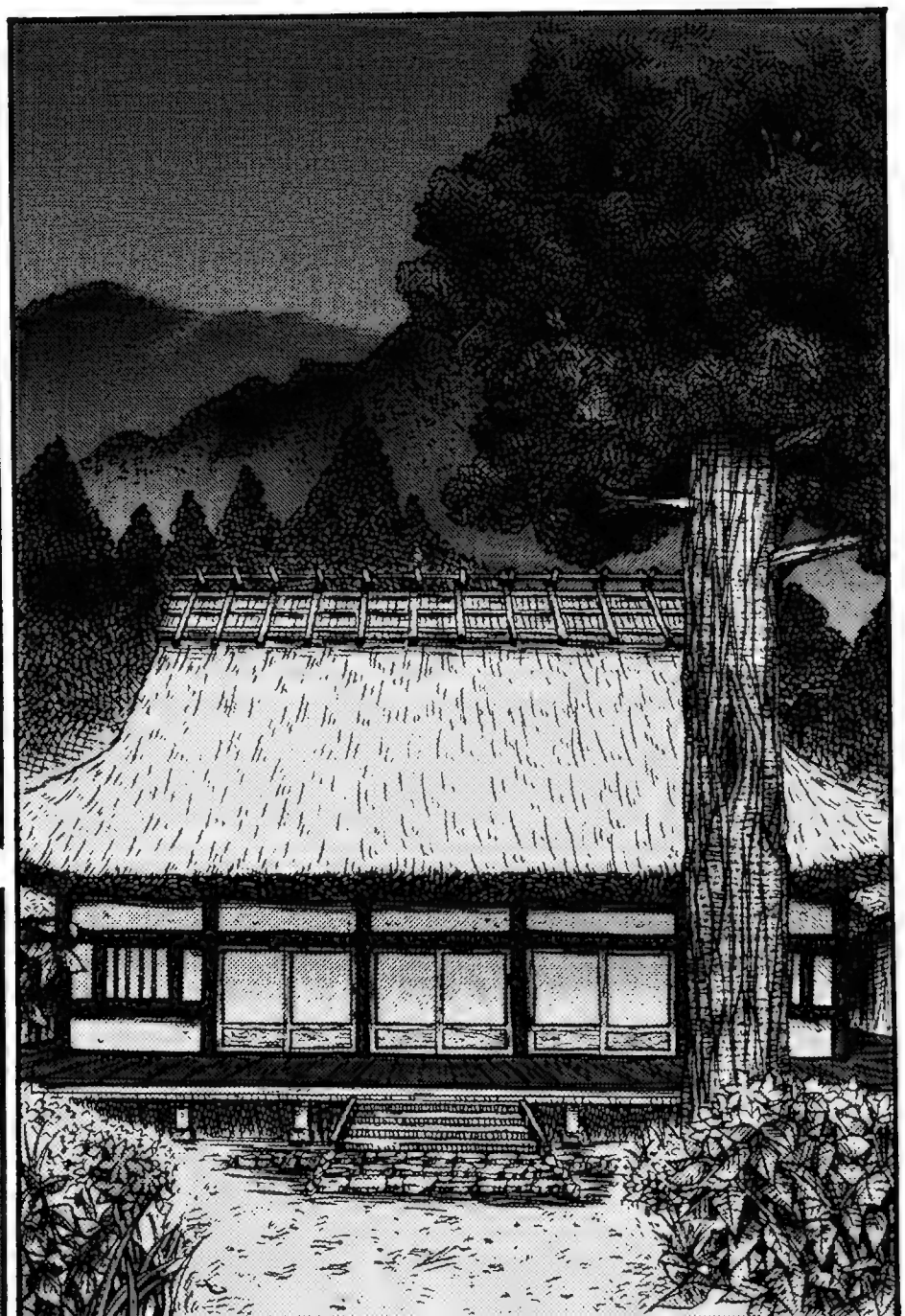

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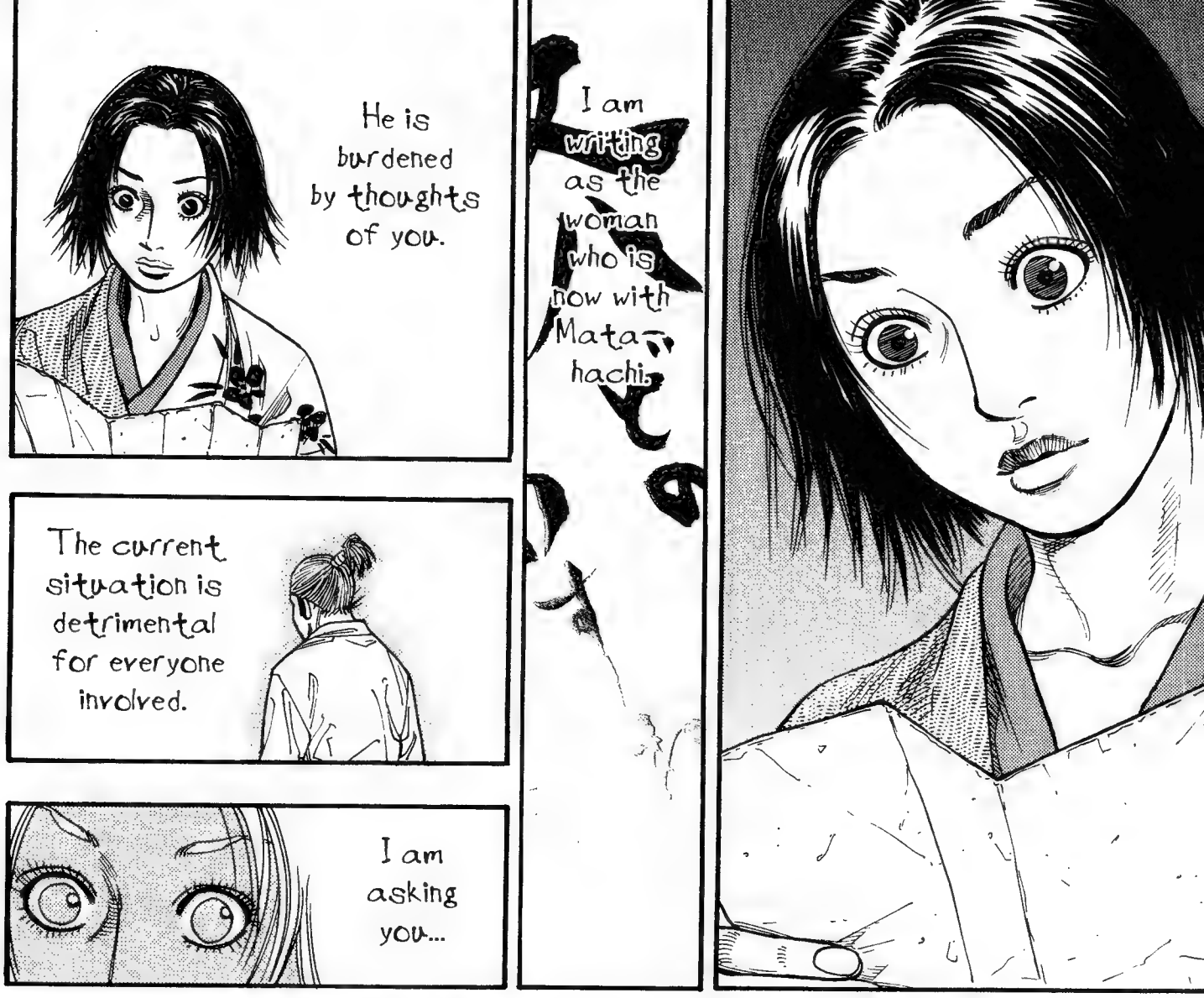

HE'S LIVING WITH A WOMAN IN ANOTHER PROVINCE.


WHO COULD IT BE...?

(TO OTSŪ)


おつう様
おつう!

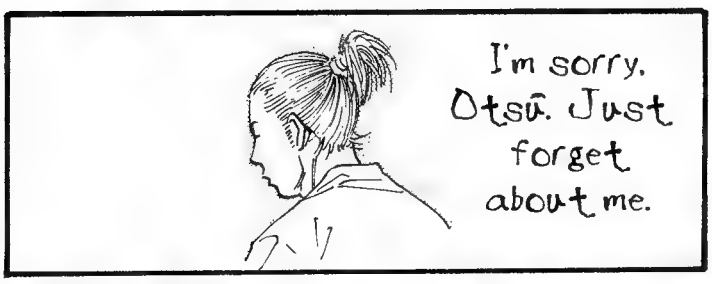



He is burdened by thoughts of you.
I am writing as the woman who is now with Mata-hachi.
The current situation is detrimental for everyone involved.
I am asking you...


...to forget Mata-hachi.
Okō

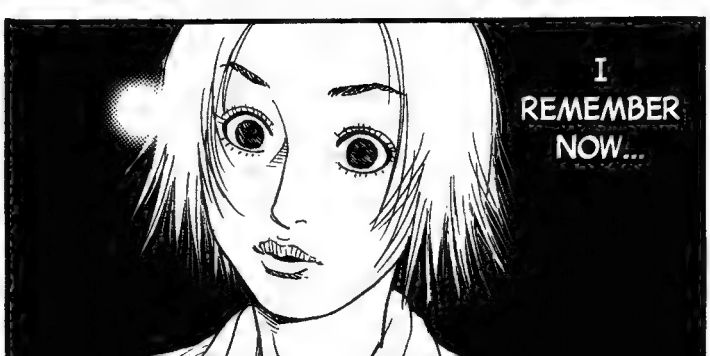

OKŌ?

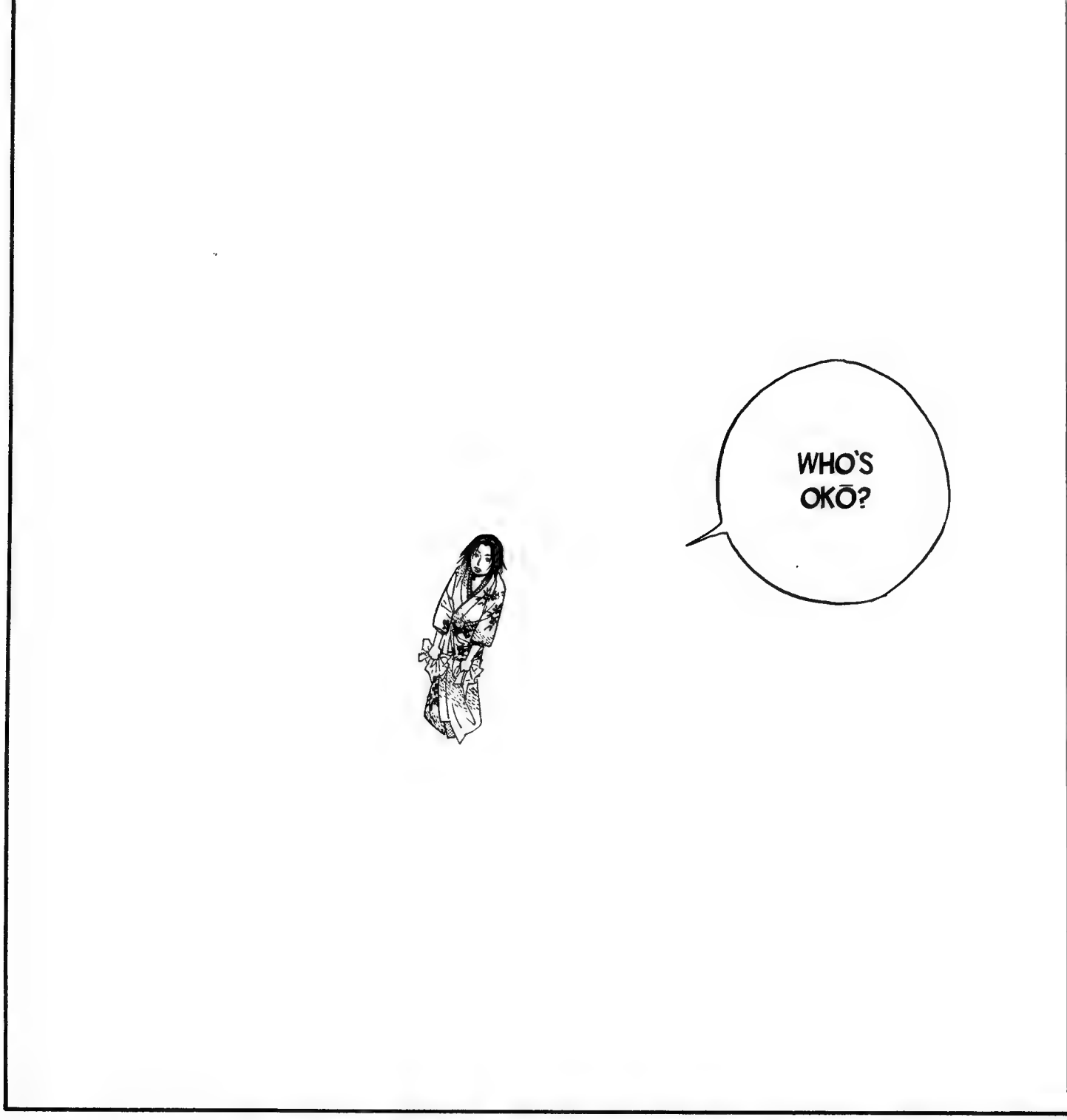

...MATAHACHI'S FACE.


I'm sorry, Otsū. Just forget about me.




And have a happy life.
Matahachi


I REMEMBER NOW...


WHO'S OKŌ?


SNIF


AAAA!
ARRGH!
!?
CHOMP
ARRGH
ARRGH!
WHAT'S WRONG, OTSŪ!?
AAA!
WHO'S OKŌ!? WHY--!!

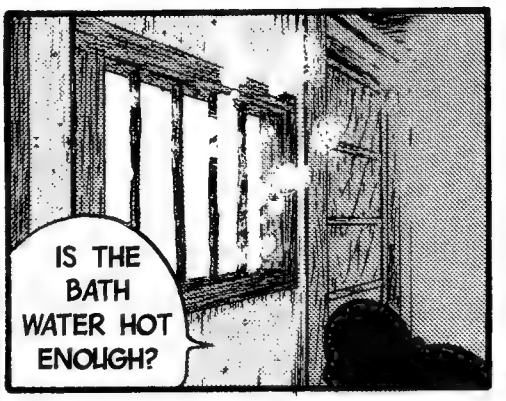

THESE ARE MATA-HACHI'S.
YOU CAN WEAR THEM.
FWP
COME ON IN.
I'M SO ASHAMED. I LOST CONTROL.
...EVERYONE'S LOOKING FOR YOU.
HURRY UP...
...I'M SORRY.
I'M FINE.
BUT YOU MUST BE HUNGRY.
YOU'VE BEEN STUCK IN THE MOUNTAINS FOR SO LONG.
WHY ARE YOU SUDDENLY --?
UR...
STAY. I'LL MAKE YOU SOMETHING TO EAT.
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A BATH WHILE I PREPARE YOUR MEAL?
...
I'M MATA-HACHI'S MOTHER.

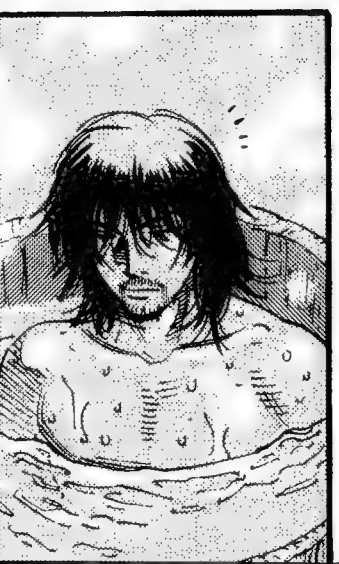

...YOU ARE MY BELOVED SON'S FRIEND.
AFTER ALL...


...!!


SO TAKEZŌ, WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS NOW?


...


IS THE BATH WATER HOT ENOUGH?




PLSH
IT'S FINE...


I WANT TO CHALLENGE MEN LIKE YAGYŪ AND YOSHIOKA.
...ALL THE MASTER SWORDSMEN RENOWNED THROUGHOUT THE LAND.
KRICH
I WANT TO FIND OUT... HOW STRONG I REALLY AM.
KRCH
KRICH


I'M GOING TO JOURNEY ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY...
...TO POLISH MY SKILLS AS A SWORDSMAN.
PLISH
PLISH
TO TRAIN IN THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR, EH? VERY ADMIRABLE.


PLISH


THERE HE IS!!
YOU CAN GO NOW.
GOOD WORK, GRANNY.
HA HA

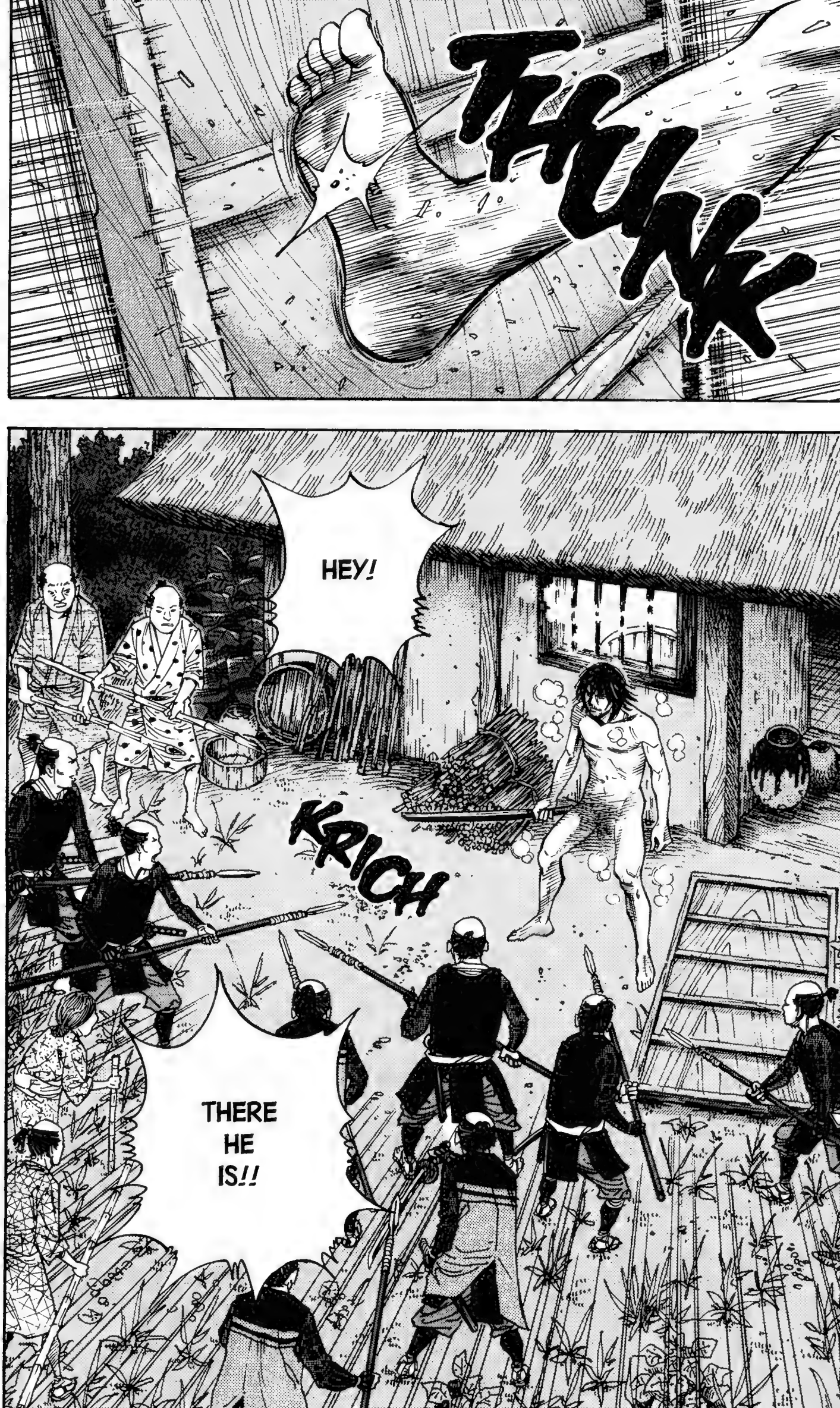

...


JUST IN CASE.
YOU MEN CLOSE OFF ALL ESCAPE PATHS.
YES SIR!


ALL RIGHT THEN.


MATA-HACHI IS ALIVE.
THAT'S THE ONLY PART I'LL BELIEVE !!
YOU PATHETIC BASTARD.
THINK I'D FALL FOR THOSE LIES?
YOU LURE MY SON OFF TO WAR.
YOU DARE TO COME BACK WITHOUT HIM...
...THEN YOU HAVE THE NERVE TO TELL ME THAT MY MATAHACHI'S IN ANOTHER PROVINCE WITH SOME WOMAN.


YOU'RE FINISHED, YOU BASTARD!!
HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE!!


THUNK
HEY!
KRICH
THERE HE IS!!


SO THIS WAS A TRAP...
...GRANNY.
DON'T BOTHER PUTTING UP A FIGHT. IT'S USE-LESS.
JUST TURN YOURSELF IN.
OF COURSE, ONCE YOU DO, YOUR HEAD WILL BE CHOPPED OFF.
IT'S ALL IN THE BEST INTEREST OF MIYAMOTO VILLAGE.
HEE HEE!

YOU'RE A DEMON!
THIS VILLAGE DOESN'T NEED ANY TROUBLE-MAKERS!


TAKE HIM!
...!


KRAK
!!
URR


YOU COWARDS.
KRICH
IF YOU'RE GONNA COME AT ME, YOU BETTER BE WILLING TO KILL ME...
OF COURSE...
...IF YOU'RE GONNA TRY TO KILL ME...


...I'LL KILL YOU FIRST.


MATAHACHI, YOU BASTARD!!


YOU JERK!!
AAAAAA
YOU TRAITOR!!



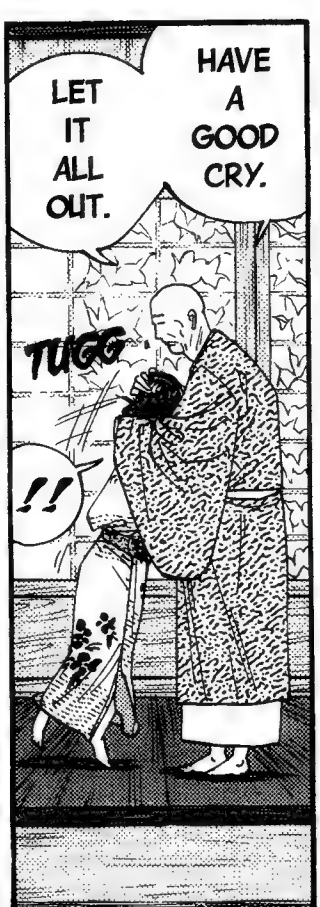
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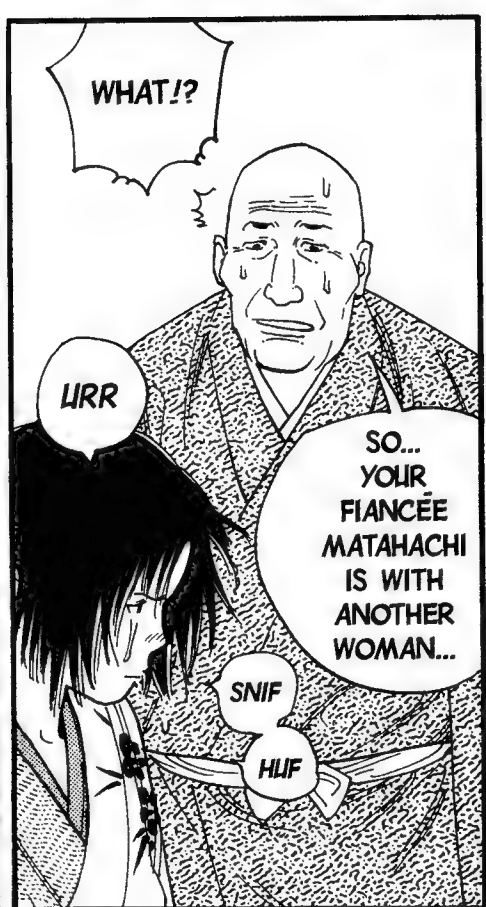

SCANNED BY :
. DEMETTER
. SUPERJOE
EDITED BY :
. PHANTOM GREYFIRE
HOSTED ON :
COLORED MANGA.COM
Vagabond
*PLEASE SUPPORT THE OFFICIAL RELEASE


RRIP
RRIP
RRIP
AAAA!
O--
OTSŪ!!
WHAT'S WRONG!?
WHAT DID THE LETTER SAY!?
WELL...


NNGH
MEN ARE ALL THE SAME!
WHUNK


OTSŪ, I WASN'T TRYING TO...


LET IT ALL OUT.
HAVE A GOOD CRY.
TUGG
!!


WHAT!?
URR
SO... YOUR FIANCÉE MATAHACHI IS WITH ANOTHER WOMAN...
SNIF
HUF



Vagabond

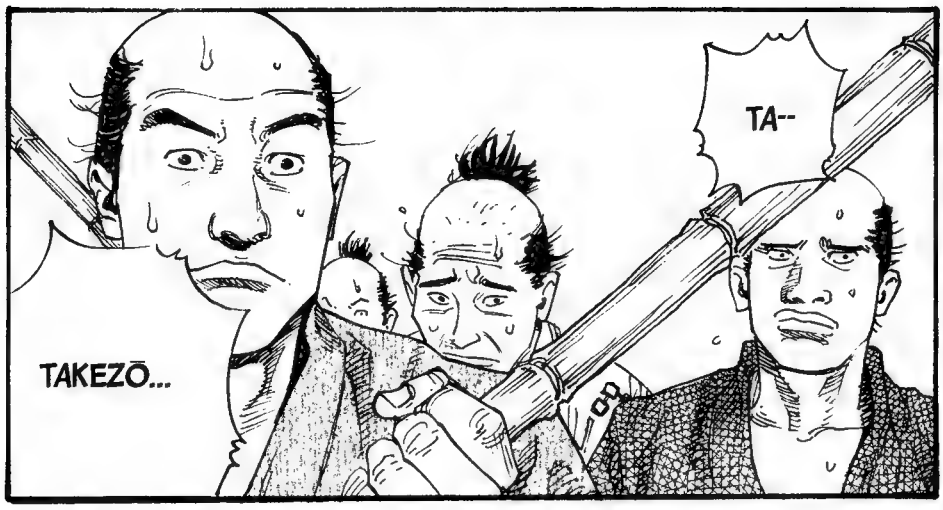
vol. 2

#11 | Demon

BWONG BWONG


TOK
HUH!?
THWAK
ARGH!


THWAK
THWAK
ARGH!
AIEE!


TA--
TAKEZŌ...

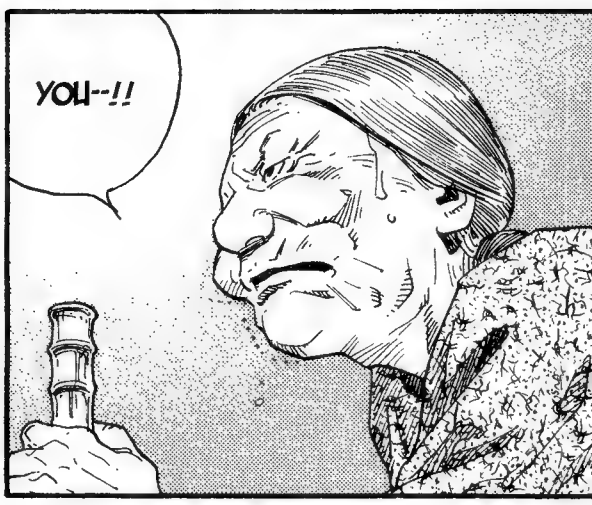

URR!
AIEE!
WHUD


TMP
HEY!!
CORNER HIM IN THERE!!


THOK
WHUD
URR.
ARGH!
UNGH.
KRAK
WHUD
WHUD
URR!!
FWAM
!!


I'M WARNING YOU. I'LL KILL YOU...


SHINMEN TAKEZŌ...
I'M IMPRESSED!

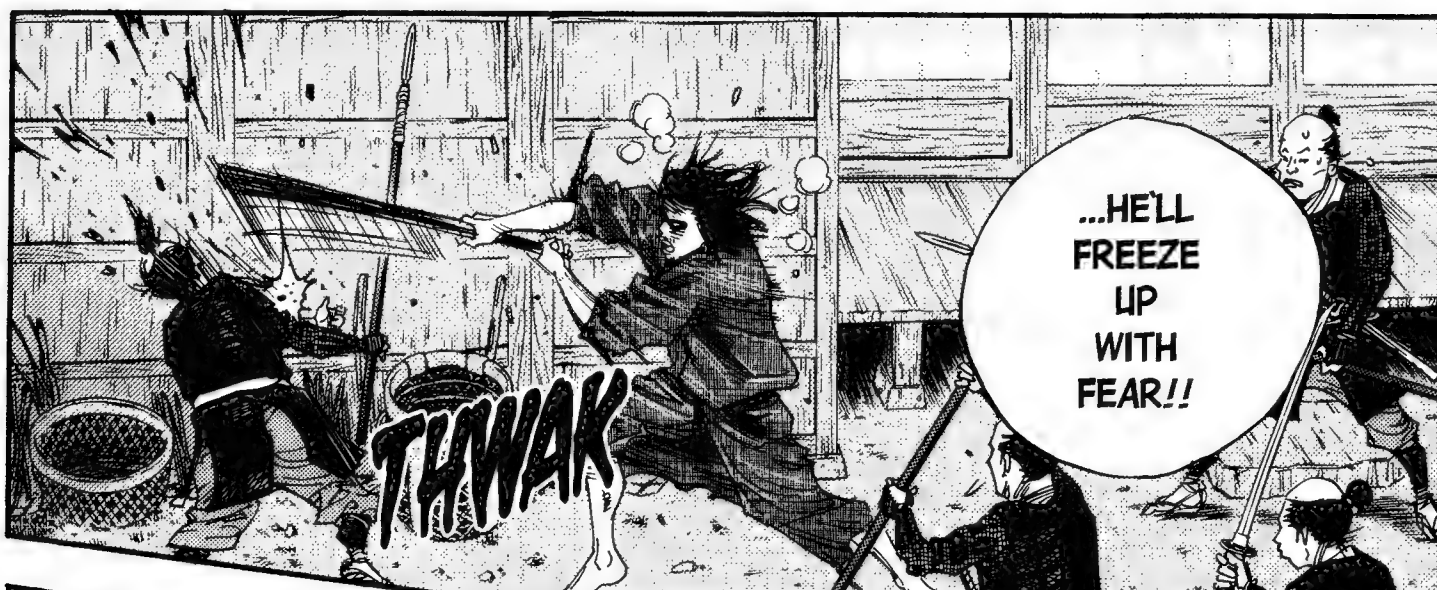

YOU--!!


SUCH RECKLESS RESIST-ANCE!
HE'S FEAR-LESS!


ARGH!
TUGG
WHAT!?
FOR THE SAKE OF HIS OWN SURVIVAL...
...HE TAKES LIVES WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT.
HE'S MERCILESS!


KRAK
EEYAH!
SUCH POWER...!
HE'S SO STRONG!!


AND THE MOMENT THIS KID REALIZES ...
...THAT HIS VERY LIFE IS COMING TO AN END...
WHUD
WITH SO MANY OPPONENTS ...
...HE'LL EVENTUALLY BECOME EXHAUSTED.
BUT THERE'S NO WAY...
...THAT HIS ENDURANCE CAN HOLD UP...


THWAK
...HE'LL FREEZE UP WITH FEAR!!


I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THE EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE!!


TMP
!!


URR...




THOK
AIEEE!
YOU'RE BOTH UNTRUST-WORTHY...
HUF
HUF
YOU AND YOUR SON.
HUF
HUF
CAPTAIN AOKI!
THUD
GET HIM! DON'T LET HIM ESCAPE!!
CAPTAIN AOKI!
WHAT'S THAT!?


AIEE!
FWISH
ATTACK!!
KILL HIM!!
!!
THWAK
NNGH!
AIEE!!
HUF
HUF
HUF




KIIIIAH!
A DEMON!!
HE'S A DEMON!!


THAT'S RIGHT!!
MATSU'S RIGHT!!
YOU'RE GONNA DIE RIGHT HERE BEFORE YOU CAN SHAME US ANY FURTHER!!
DON'T YOU HOLD ANY VALUE FOR HUMAN LIFE!?
YOU BASTARD !!
YOU'RE A DISGRACE TO MIYAMOTO VILLAGE!!
FWOOOSH
URR!!
OUTTA MY WAY!
DON'T RETREAT!!
GET OUTTA MY WAY, MATSU.
I'M NOT LETTIN' YOU BY!!
I'M NOT BACKIN' DOWN...
... TAKEZŌ!!
THAT'S RIGHT!!
DIE, YOU ANIMAL!!
WHAT ...?
LET ME GO, YOU FOOL!
MOVE IN!
TUGG
!?
HE'S DISTRACTED! ATTACK HIM NOW!!




KRNCH
NNGH!




MOICHI!!


HWAK
ARGH!


HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF


I'M GETTING THE CHILLS...!
DEMON !!


YOU DEMON!!
DEMON!!


...LOOK AT HIS EYES!!

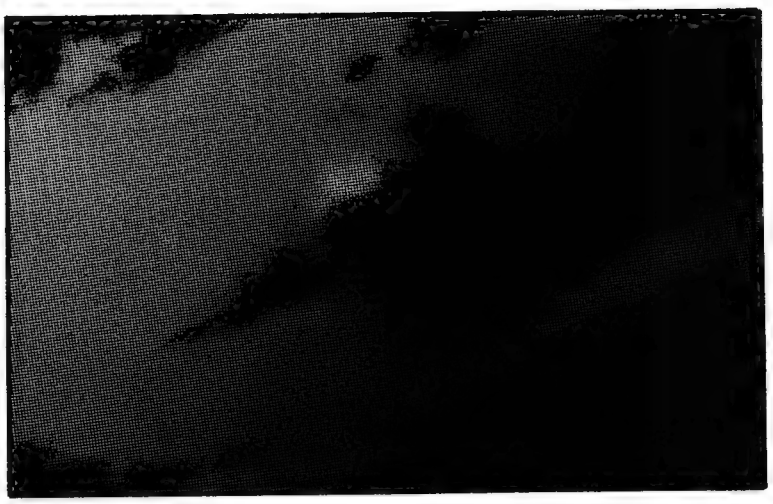

DEMON...

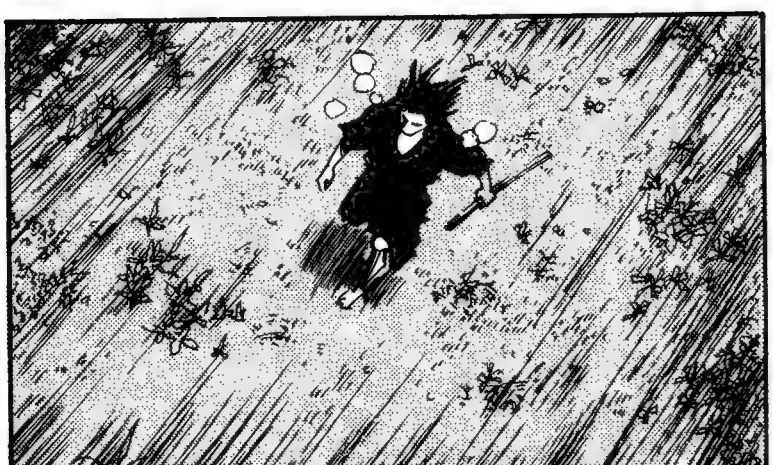

I LIKE THE SOUND OF IT.


ARGH!
AIEE!
FWOOSH




STOP, YOU BASTARD !!






!?
FWSSHH
!?
TOK
HEE HEE!
YOU FELL FOR IT!
IS IT A DEER...
...OR A BOAR?

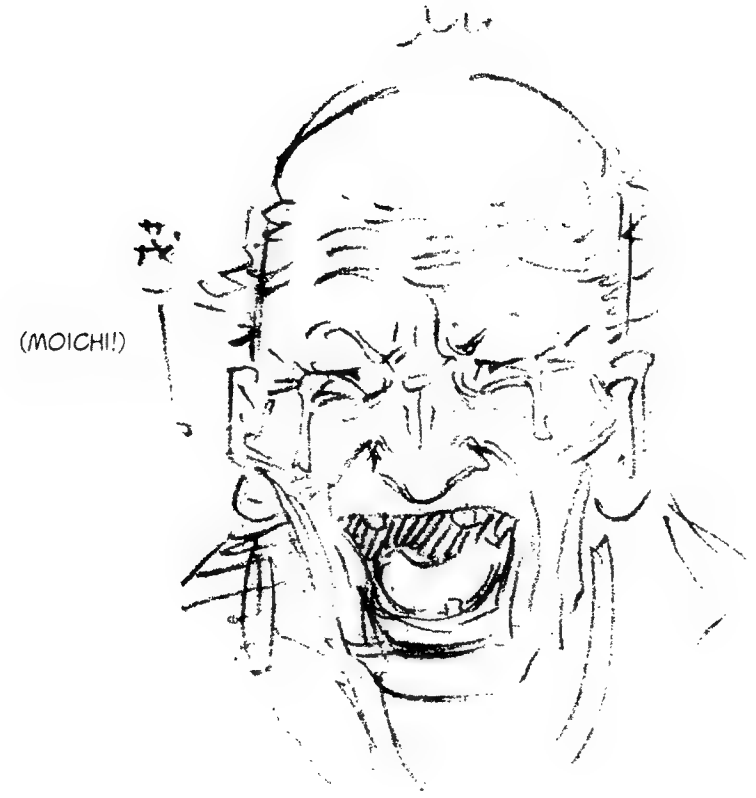



HMM...
WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S REALLY BIG...



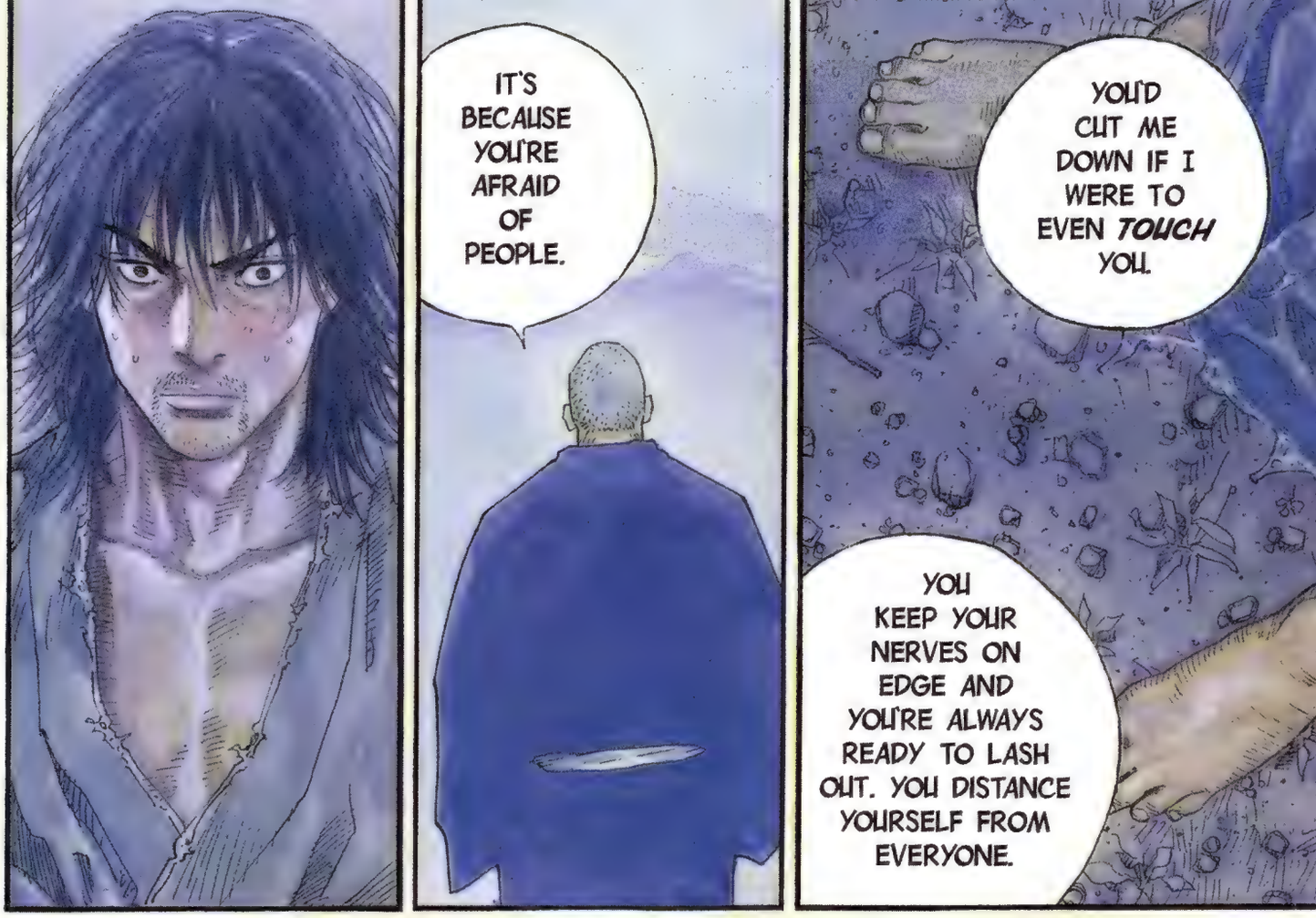

...BUT IT'S GOT A SMALL HEART.
HMPH.


Vagabond


(MOICHI!)


YOU MIGHT BE BIG...
IT'S THE SIZE OF A CAT'S.
...BUT YOUR HEART IS SMALL.
HERE THEY COME...
AREN'T YOU GOING TO RUN AWAY?
WHY WOULD A BEAST NEED TO KNOW MY NAME?
!!
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?


ARE YOU FRIGHTENED ?
HUH?
I'LL KILL YOU EVEN IF YOU ARE A MONK.
#12 Takuan


IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE AFRAID OF PEOPLE.
YOU'D CUT ME DOWN IF I WERE TO EVEN *TOUCH* YOU.
YOU KEEP YOUR NERVES ON EDGE AND YOU'RE ALWAYS READY TO LASH OUT. YOU DISTANCE YOURSELF FROM EVERYONE.


YOU ARE THE WEAKEST PERSON IN THIS VILLAGE.

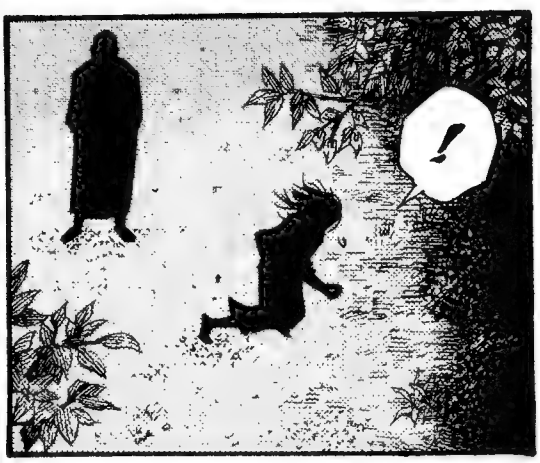

HUH?
WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT?


FWISSH




HEY!
THERE HE IS!
TMP TMP TMP

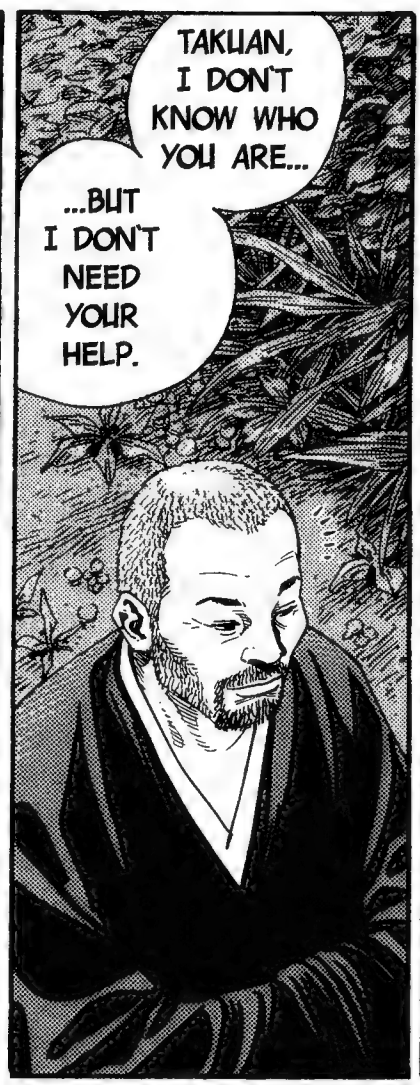

WHERE'D HE GO?
HUH !?


!

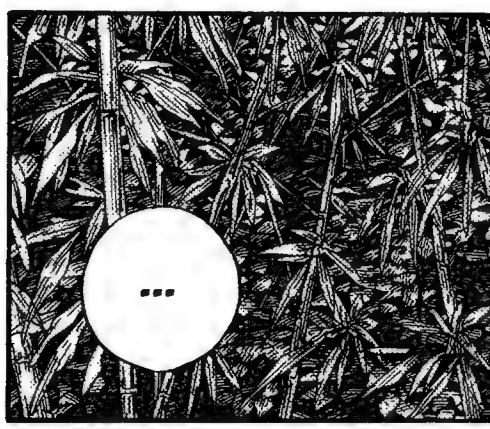

DAMN!


WHICH WAY DID HE GO?
THAT WAY.
HUF
HUF
HUF
TAKUAN!
WHERE'S TAKEZŌ?


THOSE BASTARDS CAN'T CATCH ME.
I DON'T OWE YOU A THING.


TAKUAN, I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE...
...BUT I DON'T NEED YOUR HELP.

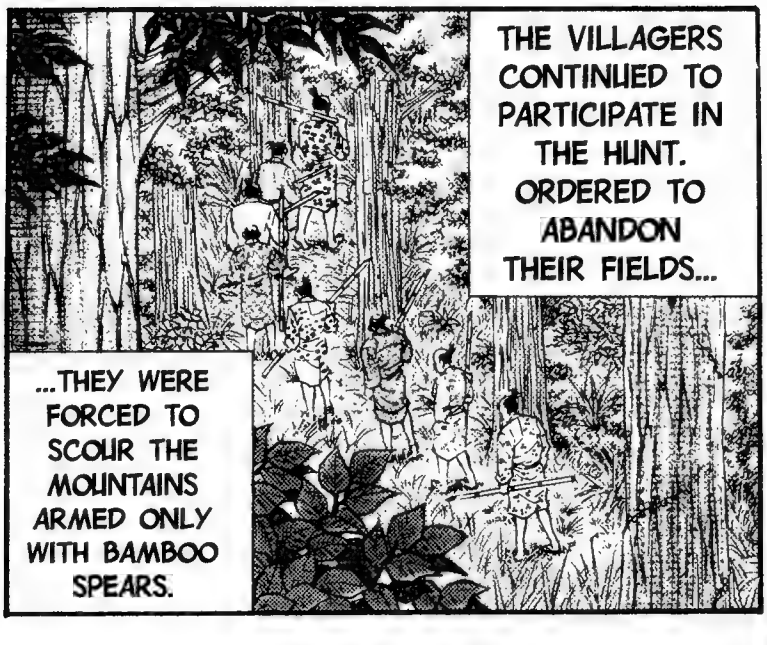

THAT WAY!
TMP

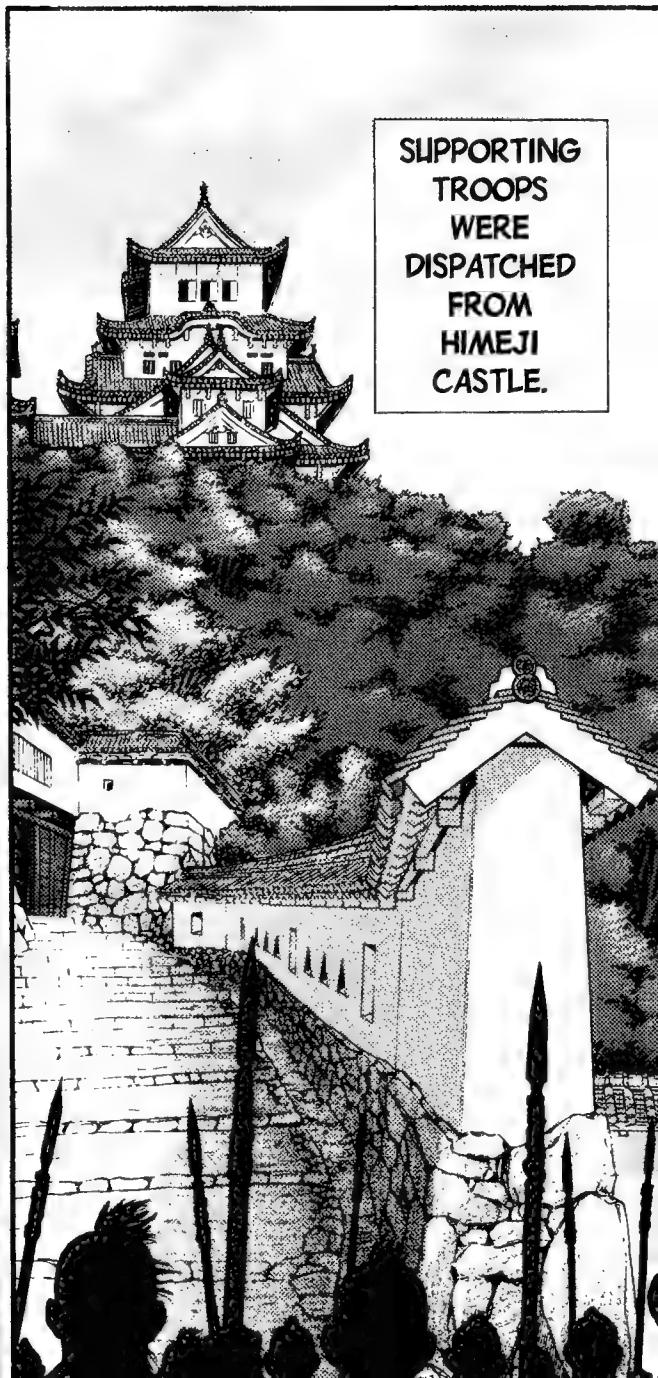

...




HEY! HERE HE IS!!
TAKEZŌ'S OVER HERE!!
!!
TMP TMP TMP
HA HA HA!


THE NEXT DAY, EFFORTS FOR THE MANHUNT WERE INTENSIFIED.


THE VILLAGERS CONTINUED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE HUNT. ORDERED TO ABANDON THEIR FIELDS...
...THEY WERE FORCED TO SCOUR THE MOUNTAINS ARMED ONLY WITH BAMBOO SPEARS.


SUPPORTING TROOPS WERE DISPATCHED FROM HIMEJI CASTLE.


HOWEVER, TAKEZŌ CONTINUED TO EVADE CAPTURE.

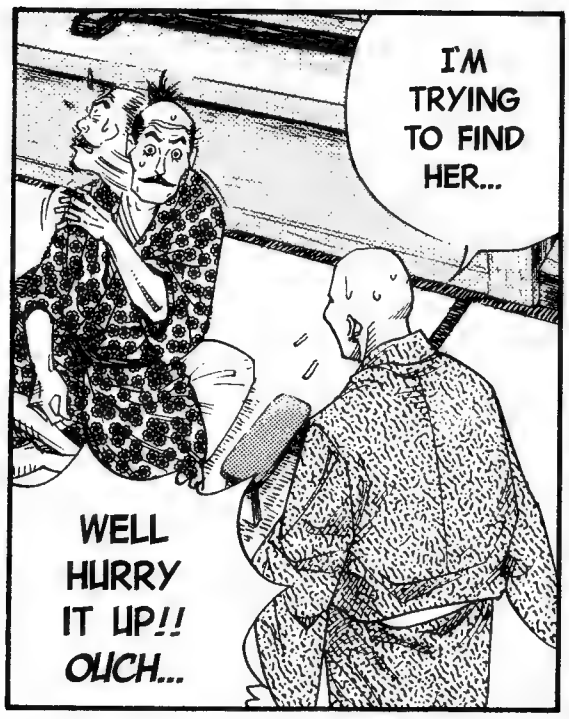

SHIPPŌJI

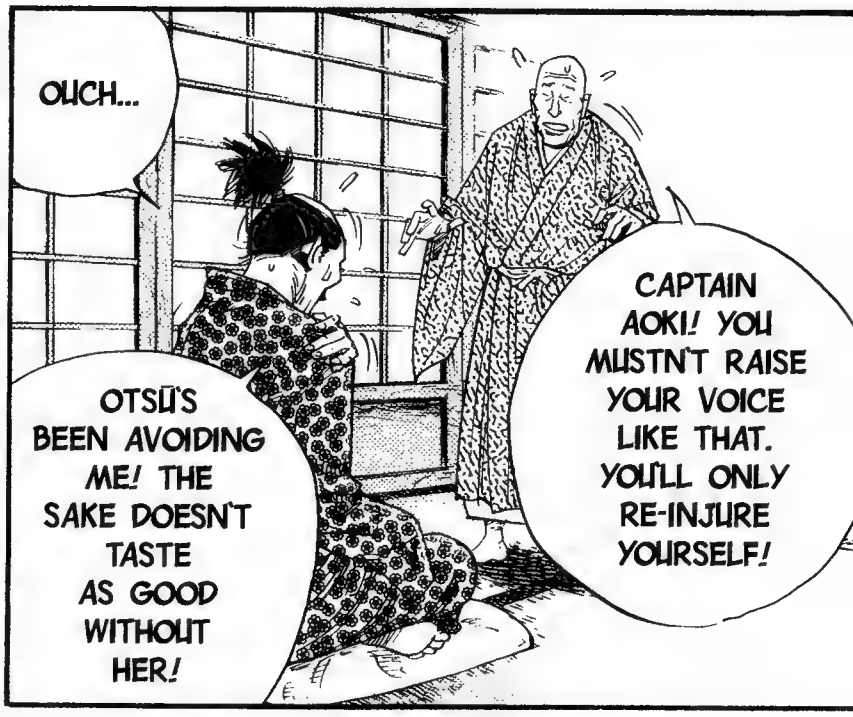

THIS IS HORRIBLE ...

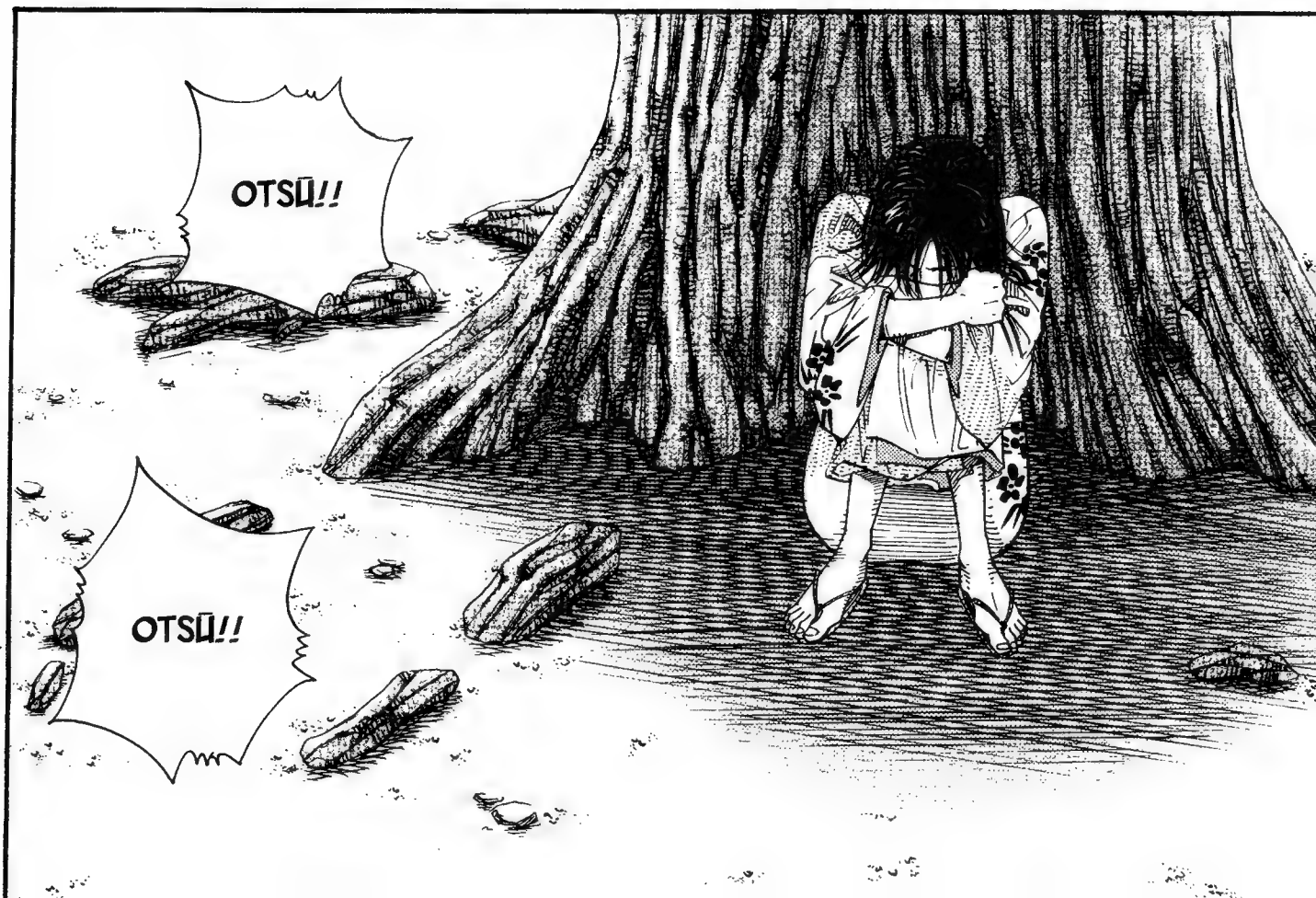

NNGH... MY SHOULDER HURTS.
THAT DAMN BASTARD.


SIPP
IF WE DON'T CAPTURE TAKEZŌ SOON, I'LL HAVE TO COMMIT SEPPUKU.


WHERE'S OTSŪ!?
OTSŪ!!


I'M TRYING TO FIND HER...
WELL HURRY IT UP!!
OUCH...

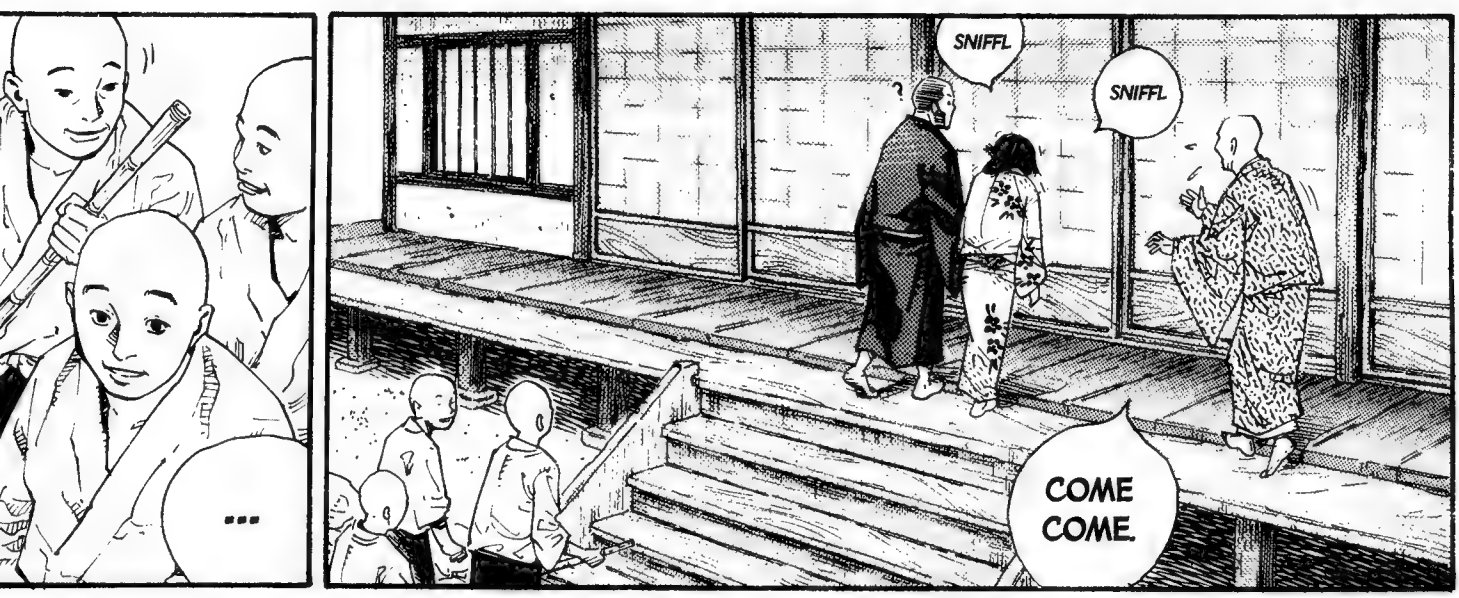

OUCH...
CAPTAIN AOKI! YOU MUSTN'T RAISE YOUR VOICE LIKE THAT. YOU'LL ONLY RE-INJURE YOURSELF!
OTSŪ'S BEEN AVOIDING ME! THE SAKE DOESN'T TASTE AS GOOD WITHOUT HER!


OTSŪ!!
OTSŪ!!


MATA-
HACHI...
YOU
JERK.
SNIFF

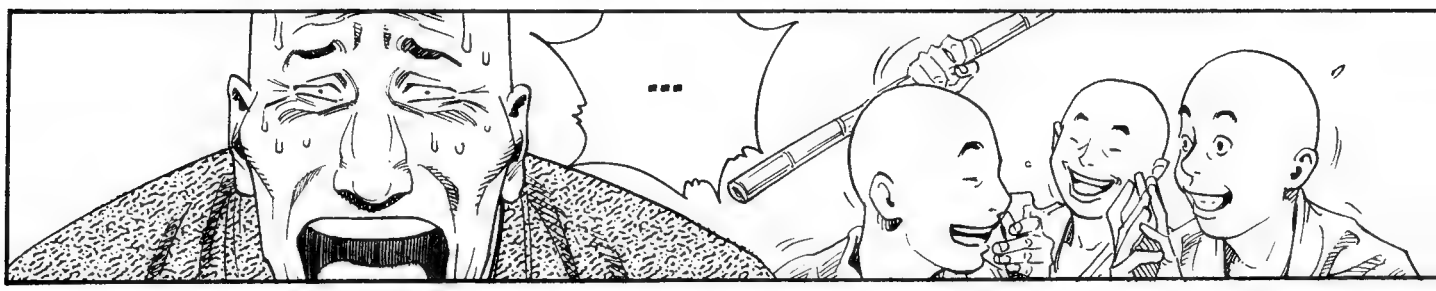

TAKUAN.
HMPH...
VERY WELL, THEN. I'LL ACCOMPANY YOU.
HMM... YOU'RE RIGHT.
I HATE THAT MUSTACHE SAMURAI.
ALL HE DOES IS DRINK.
A FOOL LIKE THAT WON'T BE ABLE TO CAPTURE TAKEZŌ.
OTSŪ...
THEY'RE LOOKING FOR YOU.
I DON'T CARE.
OTSŪ!
OTSŪ!


OH...
MATA-HACHI'S JUST HORRIBLE.
KNOD
SO YOU AND TAKEZŌ WERE CHILDOOD FRIENDS?
AND MATA-HACHI, TOO.
SOB.
OTSŪ!
TAKUAN.


...
SNIFFL
SNIFFL
COME COME.




...CAPTURE TAKEZŌ?
HOW COULD A FOOL WHO DRINKS ALL DAY...


...


THE VILLAGERS GROW WEARY OF YOU! *AND* YOUR INCOMPETENCE!

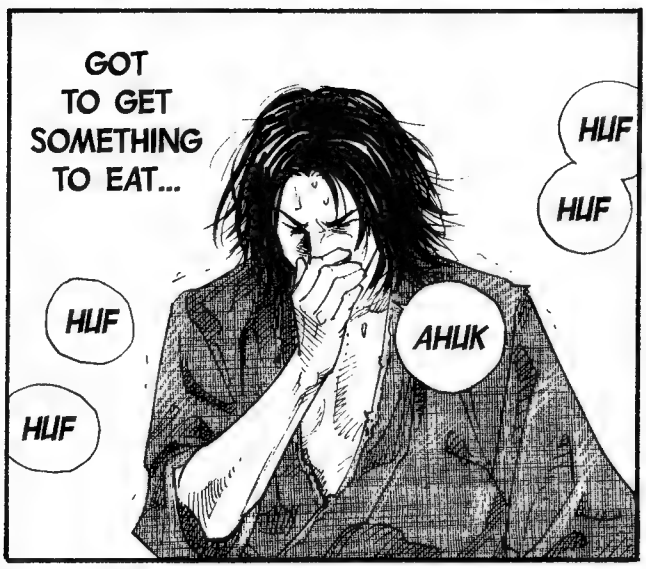

HOW MANY WEEKS, HOW MANY HUNDREDS OF MEN ...
HMPH!
...DO YOU NEED TO CAPTURE A SINGLE MAN?


WHAT WAS THAT?
URK


I'LL CUT YOU DOWN.
INCOM-PETEN--!
GASP!
HMPH.
TUGG
HOW DARE YOU!?
HMM...
IS IT EVEN POSSIBLE FOR THE INCOMPETENT CAPTAIN TO CUT ME DOWN?




HUF
HUF


GOT TO GET SOMETHING TO EAT...
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
AHUK


URGH
AHUK


HE'S EVIL!!
A DEMON.


HMPH...
HIS EYES GIVE ME THE CHILLS!!


YOU IDIOTS.
FIND HIM!?
NAH!
YOU'LL NEVER GET ME.


FWICH
FSSH


YOU ARE THE WEAKEST PERSON IN THE VILLAGE.
I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU BASTARDS THINK OF ME.
THE ONLY REASON I CAME BACK HERE WAS TO TELL OTSŪ THAT MATAHACHI IS STILL ALIVE.
...
!?
THOK
THOK
THOK
THOK
THOK

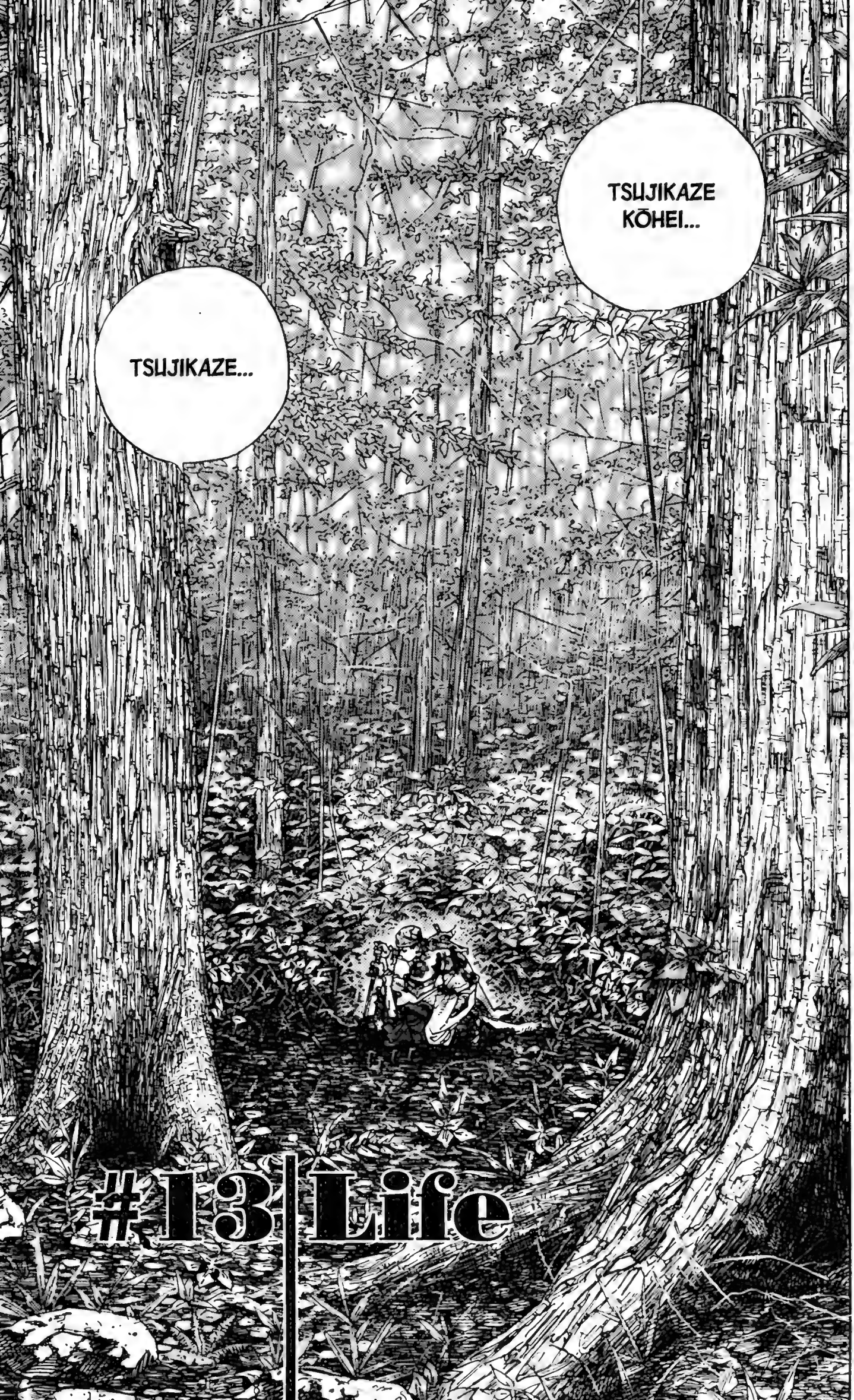



THUD


YOU'RE NOT PART OF THE MANHUNT!!
HUF
HUF
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU!?
HUF


TUGG
!


I COME FROM THE VILLAGE OF FUWA...
LOOKS LIKE EVERYONE'S AFTER YOU.
!
BUT I'LL PUT AN END TO ALL YOUR TROUBLES.
I'M TSUJIKAZE KŌHEI.


TSUJIKAZE KŌHEI...
TSUJIKAZE...
#13 Life


SO YOU'RE THE ONE...
...WHO KILLED MY BROTHER...
THUNK
NNGH!
WHUD
WHUD
URR...
FWAK
!!


...TAKEZŌ!!


URR.
FUKE


!
TWIT
!!
KRICH


SO YOU WANT TO AVENGE YOUR BROTHER.
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
SLISH
TUGG
IT'S NOT POISONED.
COME ON.
!
FWOOSH


SPLSH
GIVE IT UP...
...TAKEZO!
FWOOSH
...THE DEATH OF A PERSON LIKE YOU.
NO ONE'S GONNA MOURN...


YOU'RE GONNA END UP JUST LIKE THOSE YOU KILLED.


HUF
HUF
HUF
THRB
THWAK
AND I'M NOT HERE TO AVENGE MY BROTHER'S DEATH.
...TO KILL TENMA.
I WAS SUPPOSED TO BE THE ONE...
KRCH


YOU SNATCHED MY PRIZE AWAY SO NOW I'LL HAVE TO KILL *YOU.*


I WAS BORN INTO THIS WORLD...
...AND MAYBE I'LL LIVE TO SEE TWENTY YEARS OR SO...


HAH...
I SEE...
HA HA...
SIBLING RIVALRY.






...THEN I'LL DIE.
THAT'S ALL THERE IS. FOR BOTH *YOU* AND *ME.*


IT'S *YOUR* TIME TO DIE.




HMPH!




!!
...
FWICH
...
!!
HUH!?


HEY! THERE'S TAKEZŌ!!
!!
AND HE'S INJURED!!
SHOOP
SHOOP
SHOOP
COME ON! OVER THERE!!
HMPH...
TMP
THERE HE IS!!
IT'S TAKEZŌ!!


SURROUND HIM!!
YOU'RE FINISHED NOW, TAKEZŌ!!
KRICH
HAHHH!!


KILL HIM!!
HUF
HUF
IF HE RESISTS, JUST CUT HIM DOWN!!

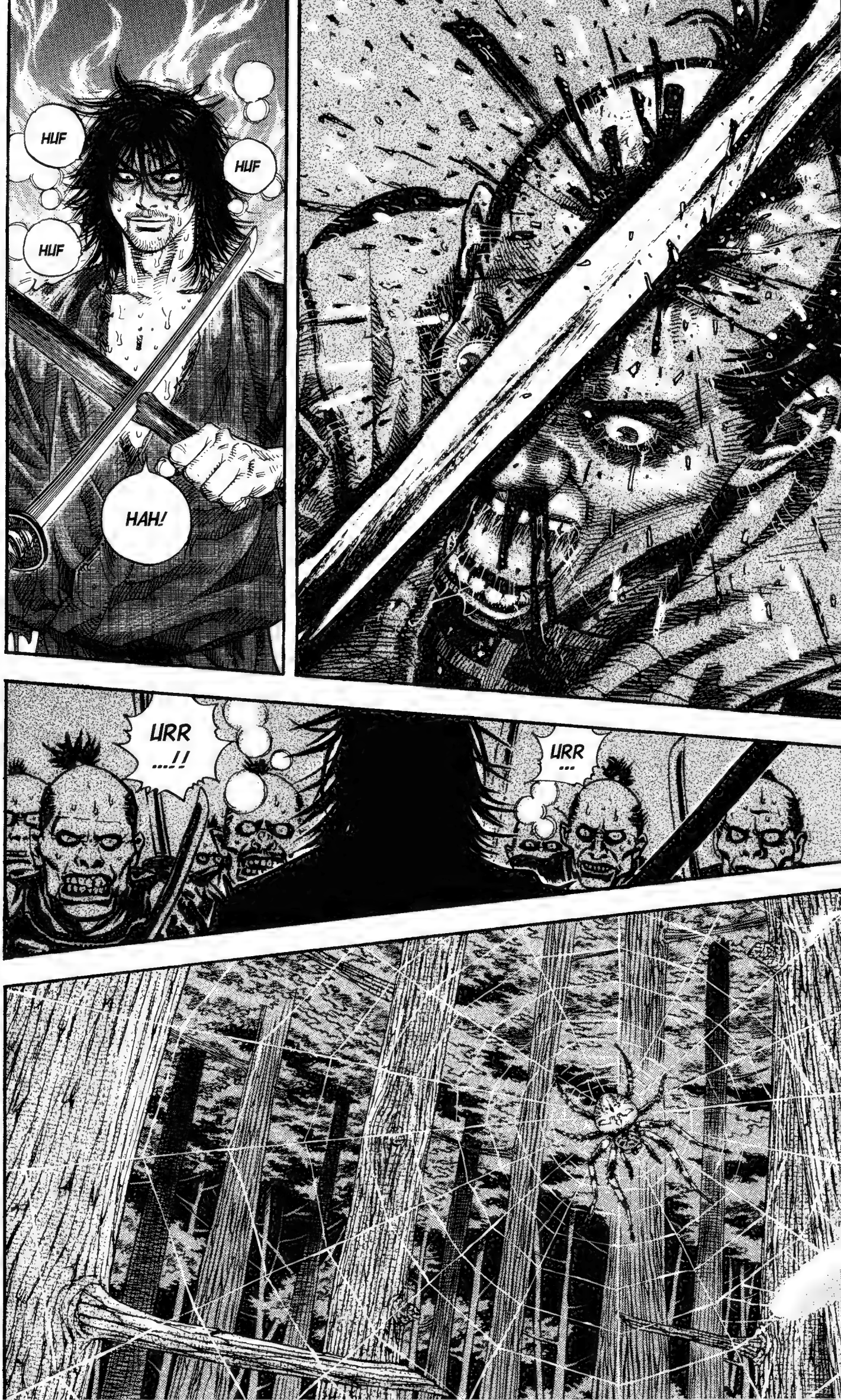





I WAS BORN INTO THIS WORLD...
...AND HAVE LIVED FOR 17 YEARS...
FOR WHAT PURPOSE?


Y-
YOU...
BASTARD
!!
YOU'RE
STILL
FIGHTING
BACK!?
BASTARD
!!
CUT
HIM
DOWN!!
THWAK
ARR!
URGH!
WHUD
!!


TAP
TAP
!!
AYAHHH!
I GOT HIM!!
!!
THOK THOK
FWISH
ARGH!!
URR...


HUF
HUF
HUF
HAH!
URR ...!!
URR ...

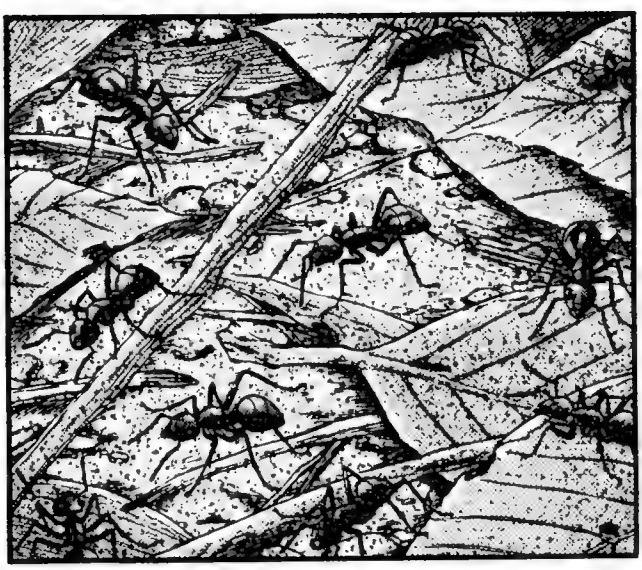

Vagabond

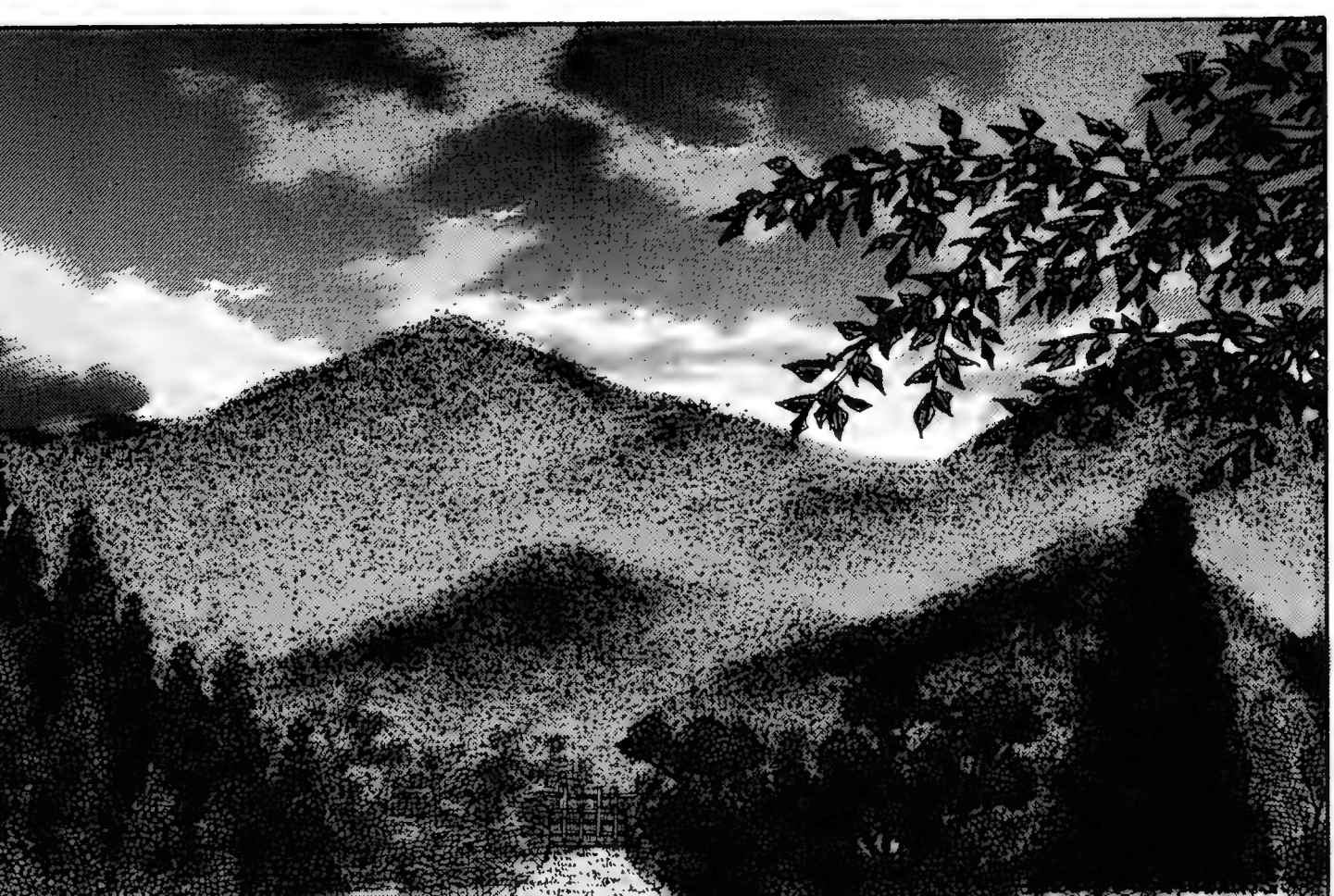


(SPIDER DEMON)










HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
#14 Cut Down


WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD IN STORE FOR ME?
HUF
HUF
HUF

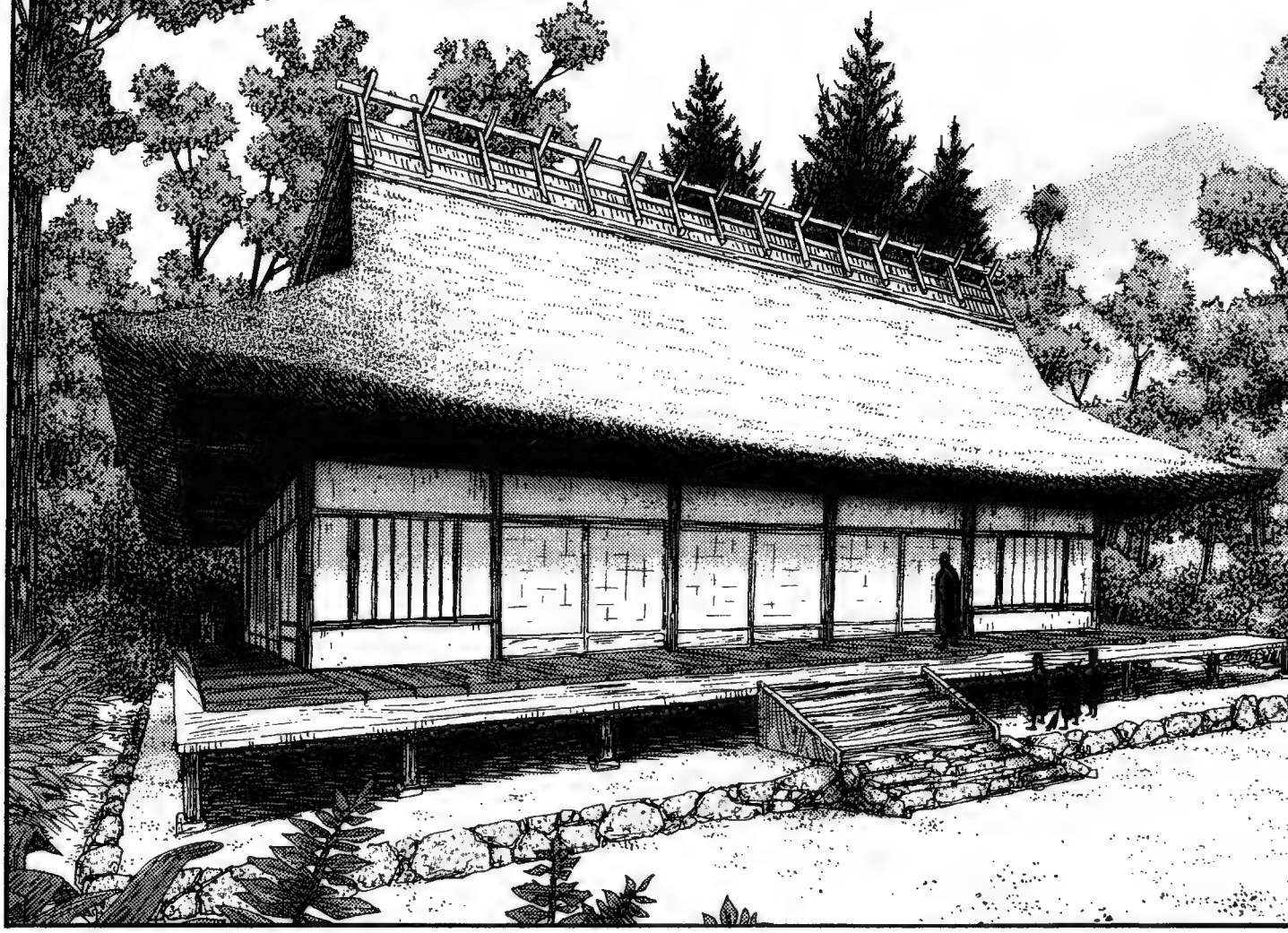
I DON'T CARE.


HUNTED DOWN.

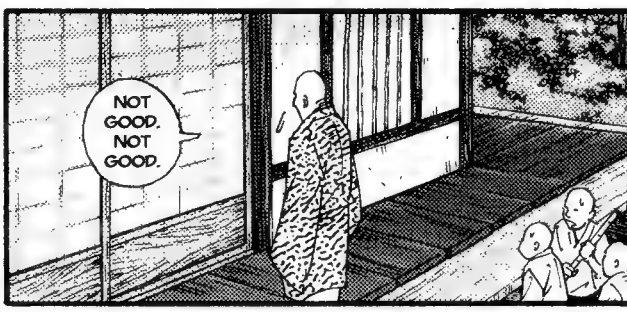

I AM HATED...


HUF
HUF
HUF
SHUF
SHUF


IN THE END, I'LL BE CUT DOWN, TOO.
I KILL AND KILL, OVER AND OVER AGAIN.
KAW
KAW
KAW
KAW
KAW
THAT'S ALL THERE IS.



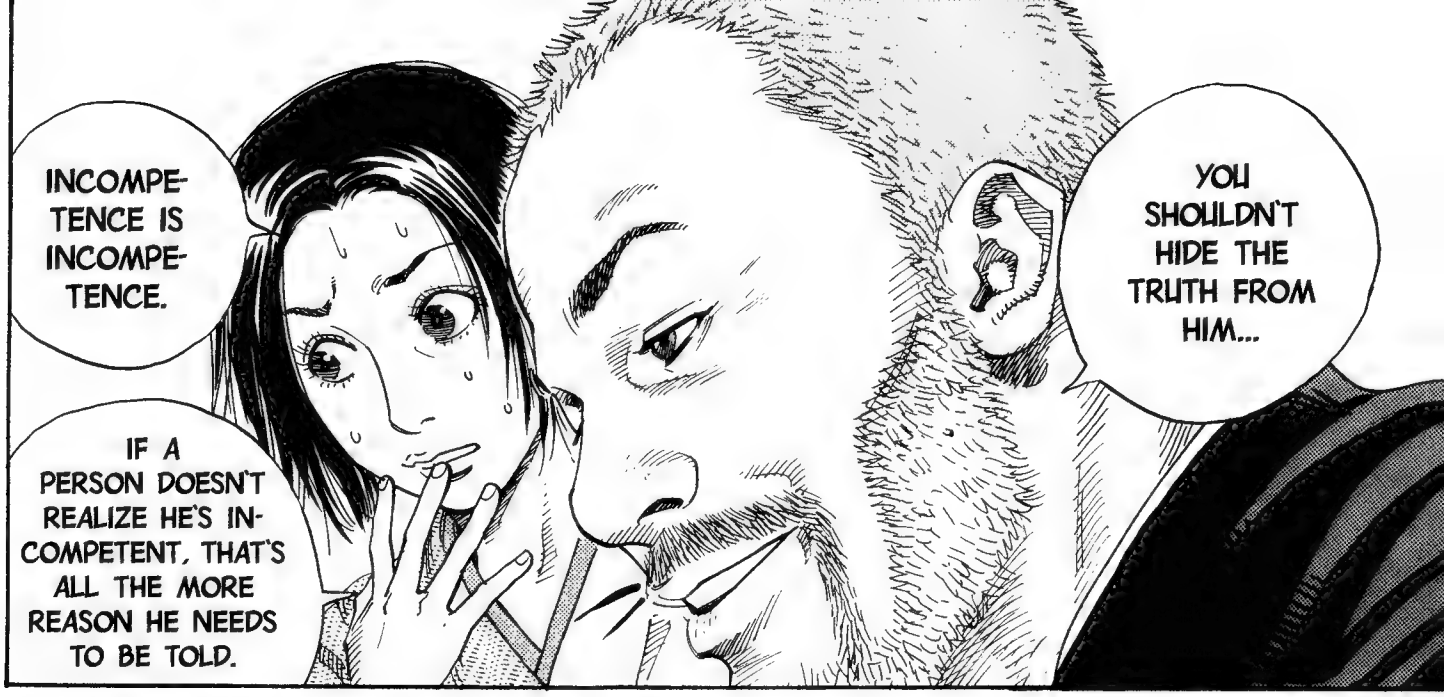

GASP!


NOT GOOD. NOT GOOD.


ALL RIGHT THEN, I'LL REPEAT MYSELF ONE MORE TIME.
HA HA HA!
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU?


YOU JUST TRY AND SAY THAT AGAIN!!
STOMP


...SO THAT EVEN YOU'LL BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND.
I'LL SPEAK S-L-O-W-L-Y ...
IN...
...COM...
...PE...
GASP!
MMBL MMBL.
PUNSH
SHHH!!
...DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY.
...HE'S ALWAYS MOUTHING OFF, SAYING CRAZY THINGS...
URK!
UH, WELL...
MMBL MMBL.
INCOM-PETENT
SHHH!!


INCOMPE-TENCE IS INCOMPE-TENCE.
IF A PERSON DOESN'T REALIZE HE'S IN-COMPETENT, THAT'S ALL THE MORE REASON HE NEEDS TO BE TOLD.
YOU SHOULDN'T HIDE THE TRUTH FROM HIM...


HOW *DARE* YOU... *INSULT* ME!?
YOU'RE FINISHED NOW, MONK!!
FCH
GASP!


HUH?
FWUMP
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT TAKEZŌ!!
I'M *COMPLETELY* APPALLED!!




WHY DID HE LET THIS FOOL LIVE?
THAT SILLY TAKEZŌ.
!!
I MEAN...
...THE VILLAGERS HAVE HAD TO STOP WORKING THE FIELDS BECAUSE OF HIS INCOM-PETENCE.
...THEY'RE FORCED TO JOIN THE MANHUNT AND WORK FOR FREE.
IT'S JUST HORRIBLE.
THE VILLAGERS HAVE TO MAKE A LIVING.
ON TOP OF THAT, TAKEZŌ'S A WILD BEAST.
THEY'RE RISKING THEIR LIVES TO HUNT HIM DOWN.
HMPH...
IT'S FOR THE SECURITY OF--
OF THE VILLAGE? *THAT'S* WHY THEY SHOULD RISK THEIR LIVES? *HMM*...PERHAPS YOU ARE RIGHT...


OTSŪ! YOU SHOULD GO TO THE MOUNTAINS.
GO AND CAPTURE TAKEZŌ.


WHAT!?
WHAT ARE YOU--?


WHAT?


I KNOW I KNOW...
IT'S DANGEROUS FOR A WOMAN TO BE ALONE IN THE WOODS.
I'LL ACCOMPANY HER.
SO YOU STILL WANT OTSŪ...
URK
...TO SERVE YOU YOUR SAKE?
YUCK!
THAT'S NOT THE POINT!
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?
HEE HEE HEE
WHERE'S OTSŪ!?
OTSŪ!
...!!
OTSŪ!
HMPH.
HA HA HA! NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TRY IT'S NO USE. ONE LOOK ON HER FACE AND IT'S OBVIOUS...
...SHE FINDS YOU REPULSIVE.
URRR...


BY THE WAY...
...WHEN DO YOU PLAN ON SWINGING THAT SWORD OF YOURS?




ZHOOP
TAKUAN, SIR!!
TAKUAN!!
TMP
TMP


HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
T-TA--
TAKUAN...?
...
HA HA
HA HA!!
YOUR
HIPS!
YOUR
HIPS!


SWAK
HA HA HA!
...!!
IF YOU DON'T PUT STRENGTH IN YOUR HIPS, THE ONLY THING YOU'LL CUT IS SKIN!!


DID THEY JUST CALL HIM TAKUAN ...!?
TAKUAN...

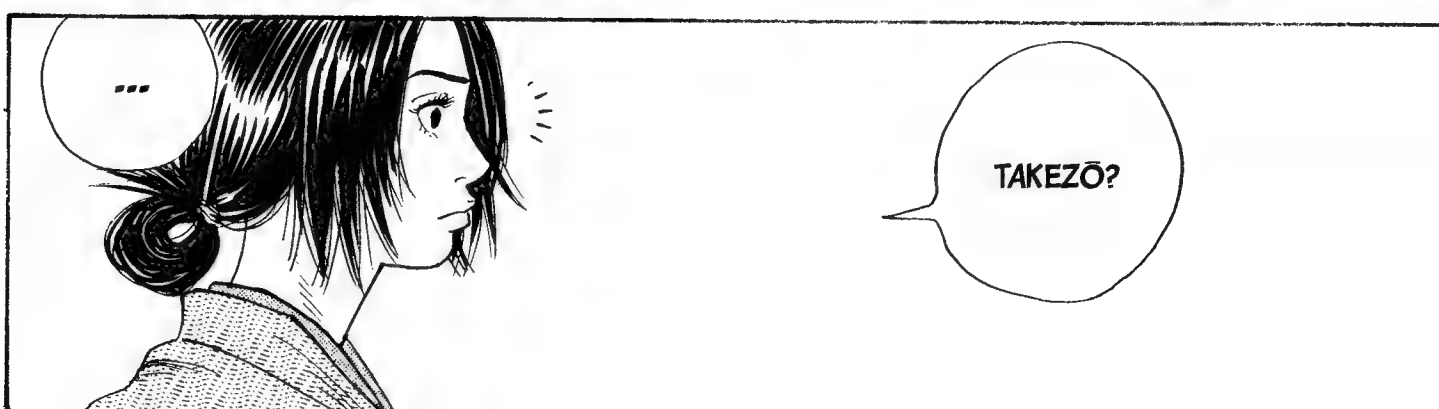

THESE ARE THE BASIC VIRTUES REQUIRED OF YOUR POSITION.
LOYALTY TO THE LORD.
CHARITY TO THE PEOPLE.


THE CLOSE FRIEND OF IKEDA TERUMASA, THE LORD OF HIMEJI CASTLE...!?
TAKUAN SŌHŌ!!
YOU COULD CARE LESS ABOUT DISRUPTING THE VILLAGERS' LIVES...
PLEASE, TAKUAN, ENOUGH!!
TAKUAN, SIR!!
TAKUAN !!
T-TA--
YOU'RE JUST A CIVIL SERVANT TAX THIEF.
BEAUTIFUL WOMAN ...?
FIP
ALL YOU CARE ABOUT IS FORCING A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN TO SERVE YOU SAKE.
...NOR DO YOU CARE ABOUT YOUR MEN'S SUFFERING.
AFTER ALL THE FUSS YOU'VE CAUSED, YOU STILL HAVEN'T MANAGED TO CAPTURE TAKEZŌ.
I'D LIKE TO SAY MORE BUT IT'S OVER FOR YOU.


...
...
ULP...
YOU'LL HAVE TO COMMIT SEPPUKU.


OTSŪ...


ARE YOU AFRAID OF TAKEZŌ?


...
TAKEZŌ?

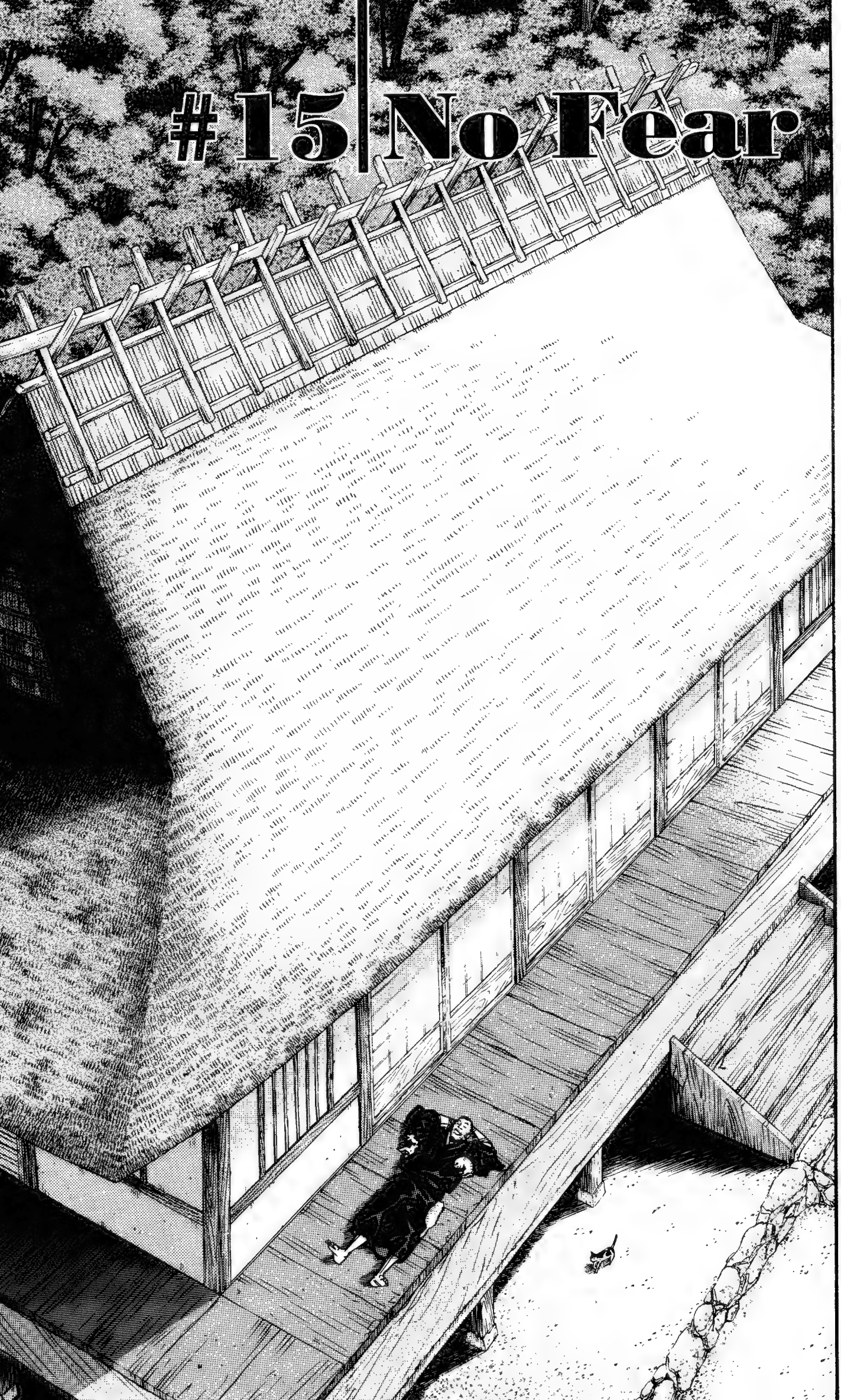

NOT AT ALL.
SMIRK
AOKI...
OTSŪ JUST MIGHT SAVE YOUR NECK.


SHE'S GOING TO BE THE ONE WHO CAPTURES TAKEZŌ!!


Vagabond

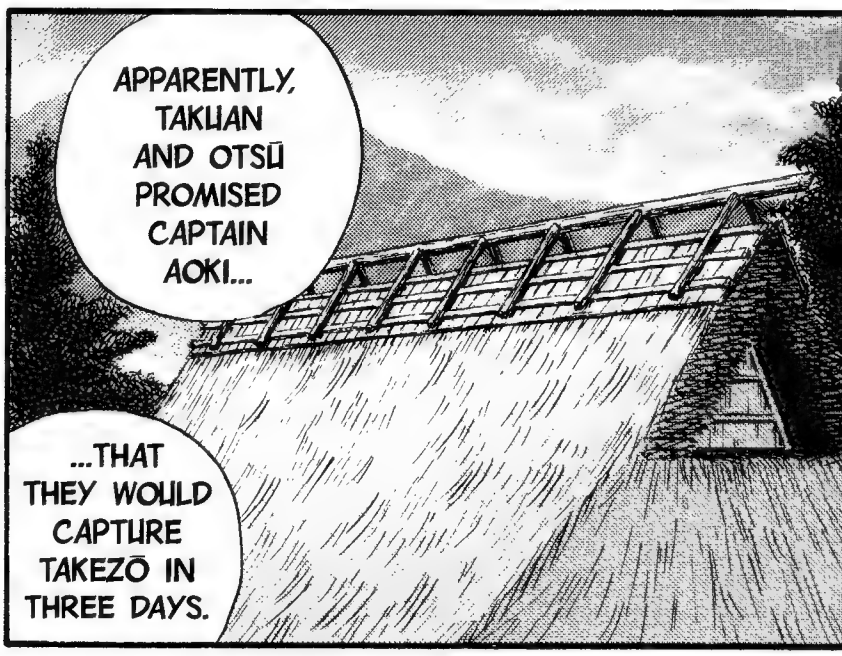

(HOW DARE YOU!?)
(LOINCLOTH)

#15 No Fear




WE'RE SO CLOSE TO CAPTURING THAT BASTARD TAKEZŌ!!
WHY HAS THE MANHUNT BEEN CALLED OFF!?


REALLY ?
IN THREE DAYS!?
IF THEY FAIL, TAKUAN SAYS HE'LL HANG HIMSELF FROM THE OLD CEDAR TREE IN FRONT OF THE TEMPLE.


APPARENTLY, TAKUAN AND OTSŪ PROMISED CAPTAIN AOKI...
...THAT THEY WOULD CAPTURE TAKEZŌ IN THREE DAYS.


TAKUAN THE MONK AND...
...OTSŪ?


THAT WAS STUPID.
THEY CAN'T CATCH TAKEZŌ IN THREE DAYS.
WE SHOULD KNOW, WE WERE OUT THERE.

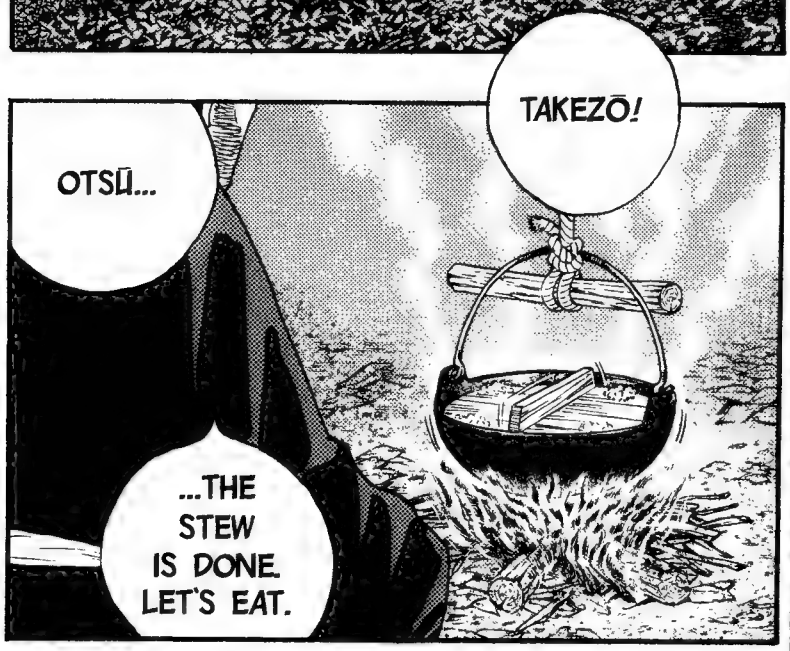

TAKUAN...
WHY WOULD MY FUTURE DAUGHTER-IN-LAW DO THAT?
WHY'D YOU MAKE THAT PROMISE?
THIP
THIP
TAKEZŌ'S NOT FOOLISH ENOUGH TO BE CAPTURED BY ME.
TMP
HUH?
TAKEZŌ!
WHERE ARE YOU!?
SWSH
SWSH
I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE HE COULD BE.


KYAAA!!


...


...
TAKEZŌ DID THIS?
WHO ELSE?
...
PLEASE FORGIVE TAKEZŌ.




TAKEZŌ!
OTSŪ...
...THE STEW IS DONE. LET'S EAT.

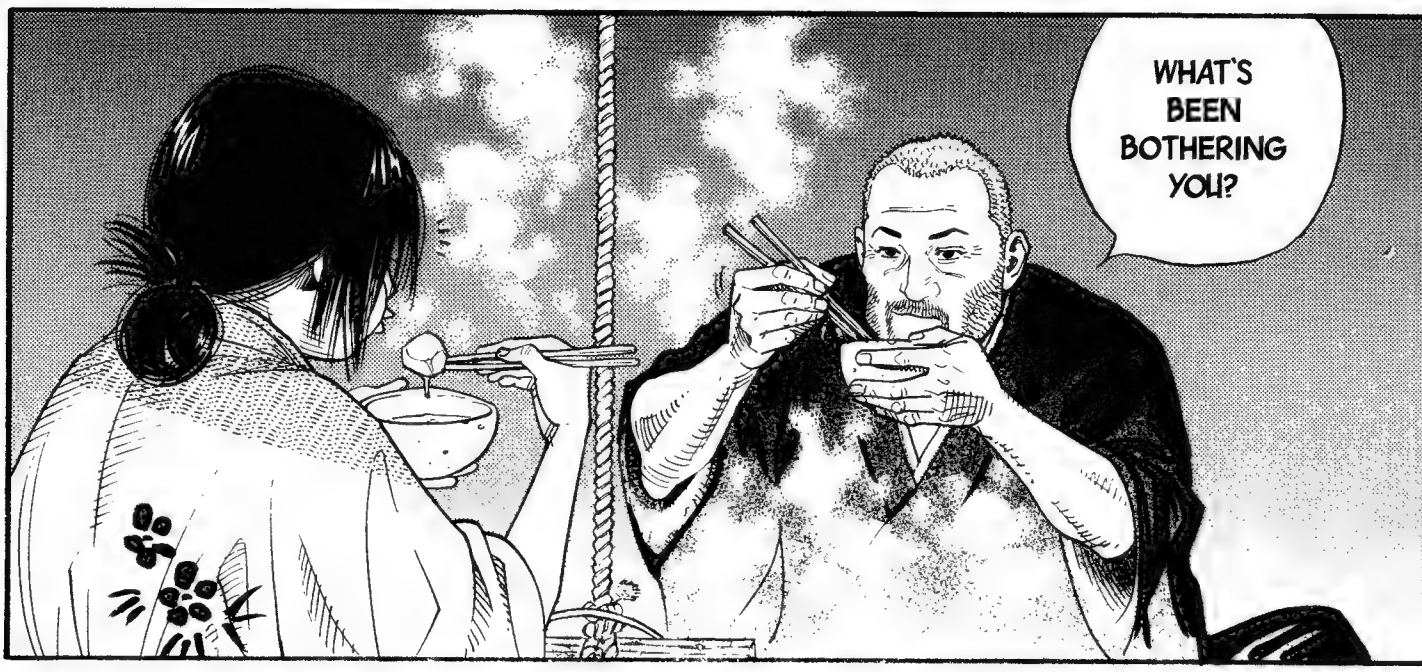

YOU TRICKED ME!
YOU'RE MAKING ME DO ALL THE WORK!!


HUH?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WE'RE DONE FOR THE DAY. IT'S GOTTEN TOO DARK.



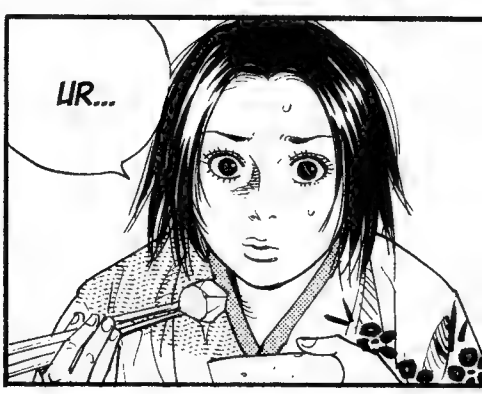

WILD GREENS FOR THE STEW!
EXCELLENT!
LOOK!
...
...?
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF

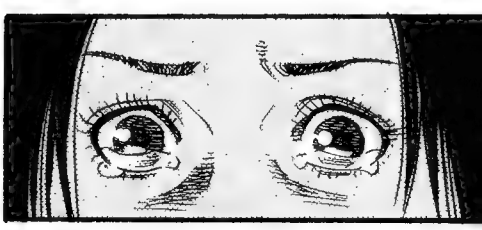

PAKA
OTSŪ...
PAKA


WHAT'S BEEN BOTHERING YOU?




WOULD YOU LIKE TO TALK ABOUT IT?


UR...



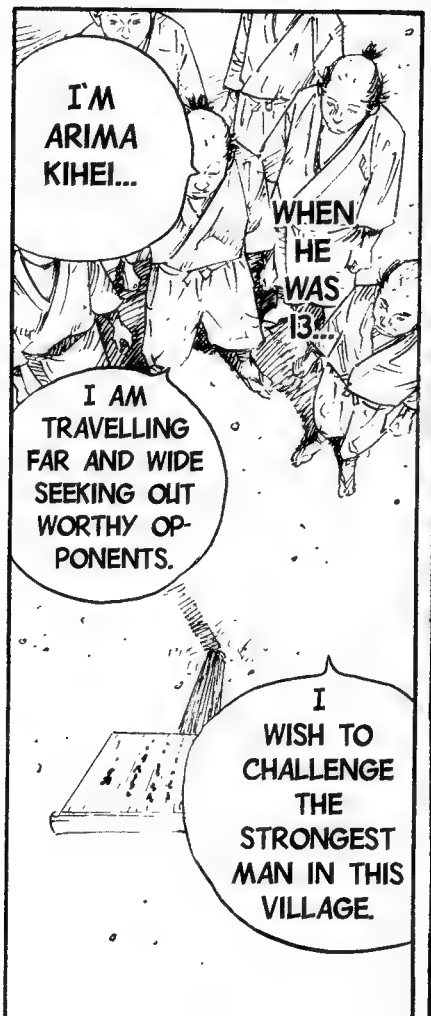

SOB


...BEFORE YOU GOT MARRIED.
WELL, IT IS FORTUNATE THAT THIS HAPPENED ...
MATA-HACHI'S A LIAR!!
SOB
I SEE.
YEAH...
YOU LOVED MATAHACHI ?
WHAT DID YOU LIKE ABOUT HIM?
...
MNCH MNCH
...


WELL, YOU SEE...


...TAKEZŌ NEVER GOT ALONG WITH ANYONE.
KRIKL
KRAKL
...EVEN WHEN WE WERE LITTLE KIDS...


?


I'M ARIMA KIHEI...
WHEN HE WAS 13...
I AM TRAVELLING FAR AND WIDE SEEKING OUT WORTHY OPPONENTS.
I WISH TO CHALLENGE THE STRONGEST MAN IN THIS VILLAGE.


LIKE A WILD BEAST...
...HE HARDLY EVER CAME DOWN FROM THE MOUNTAINS.


WHO'S THE STRONGEST ONE HERE?
NOT ME.
THAT'S FOR SURE.
!!
HM?
HEY KID...
...WHAT DO YOU WANT?


TA-
TAKEZŌ.
I'M THE STRONGEST.
...!?



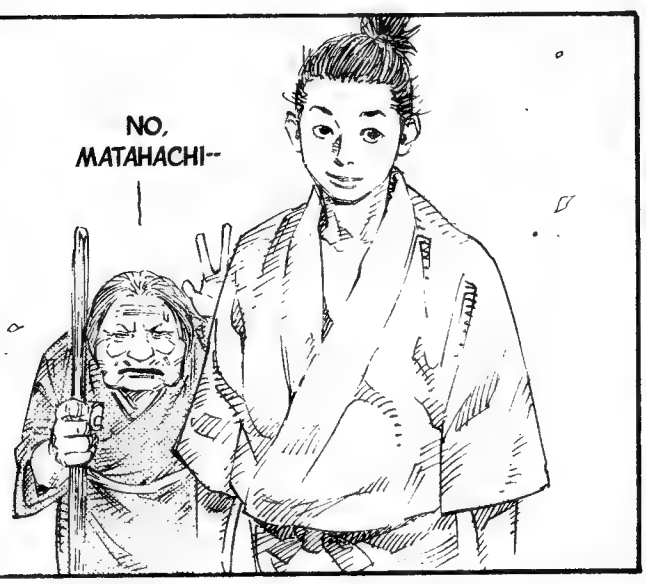

THWUNK
...


AAAA!!
AHH...
ULP!

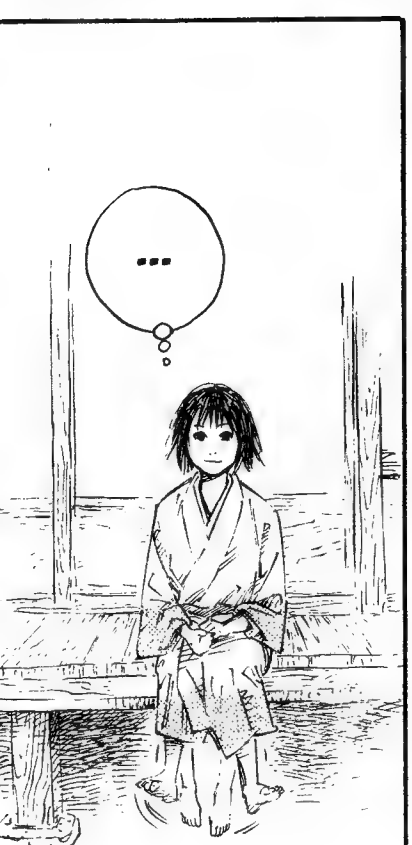

I WON.

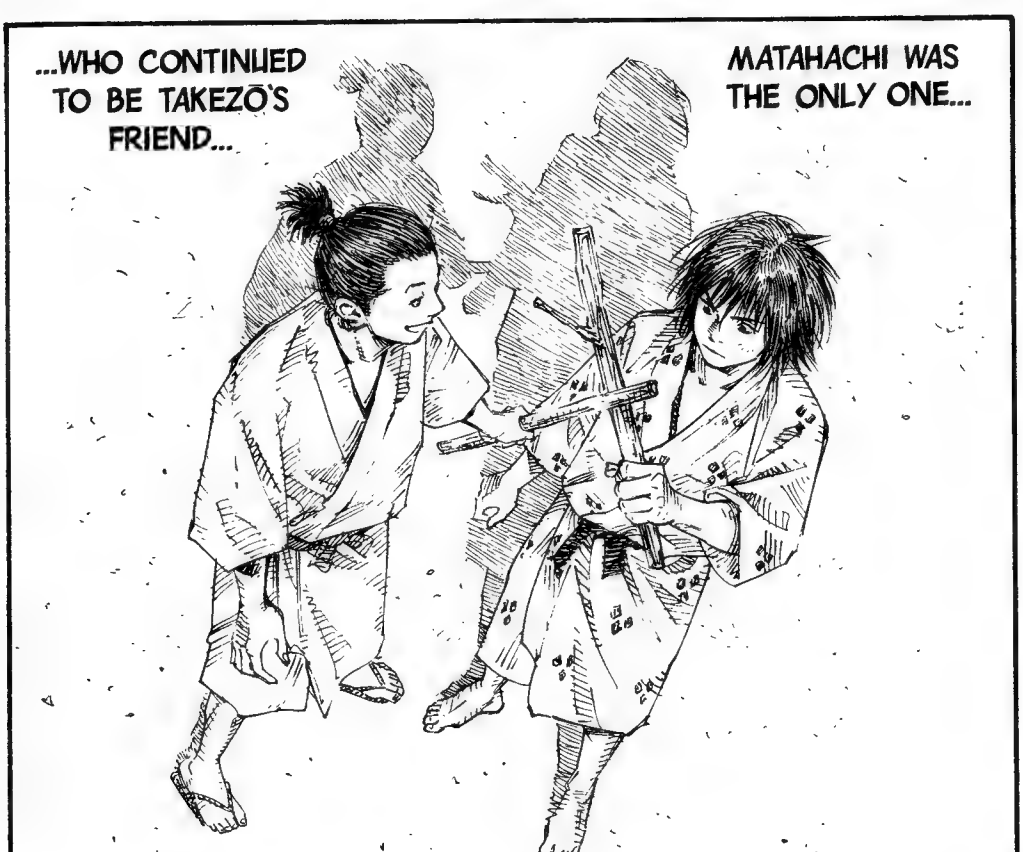

SPLSHH


EVER SINCE THAT INCIDENT...
PTU!
...PEOPLE STAYED AWAY FROM TAKEZŌ EVEN MORE THAN BEFORE.


NO, MATAHACHI--


OF COURSE THEY WERE TERRIFIED OF HIM.
KRKKL
KRKKL
BUT...


...


...WHO CONTINUED TO BE TAKEZŌ'S FRIEND...
MATAHACHI WAS THE ONLY ONE...


SNIF...
...
SOB.
SOB!
...
FWOM
THAT'S WHAT I LIKED ABOUT MATAHACHI.

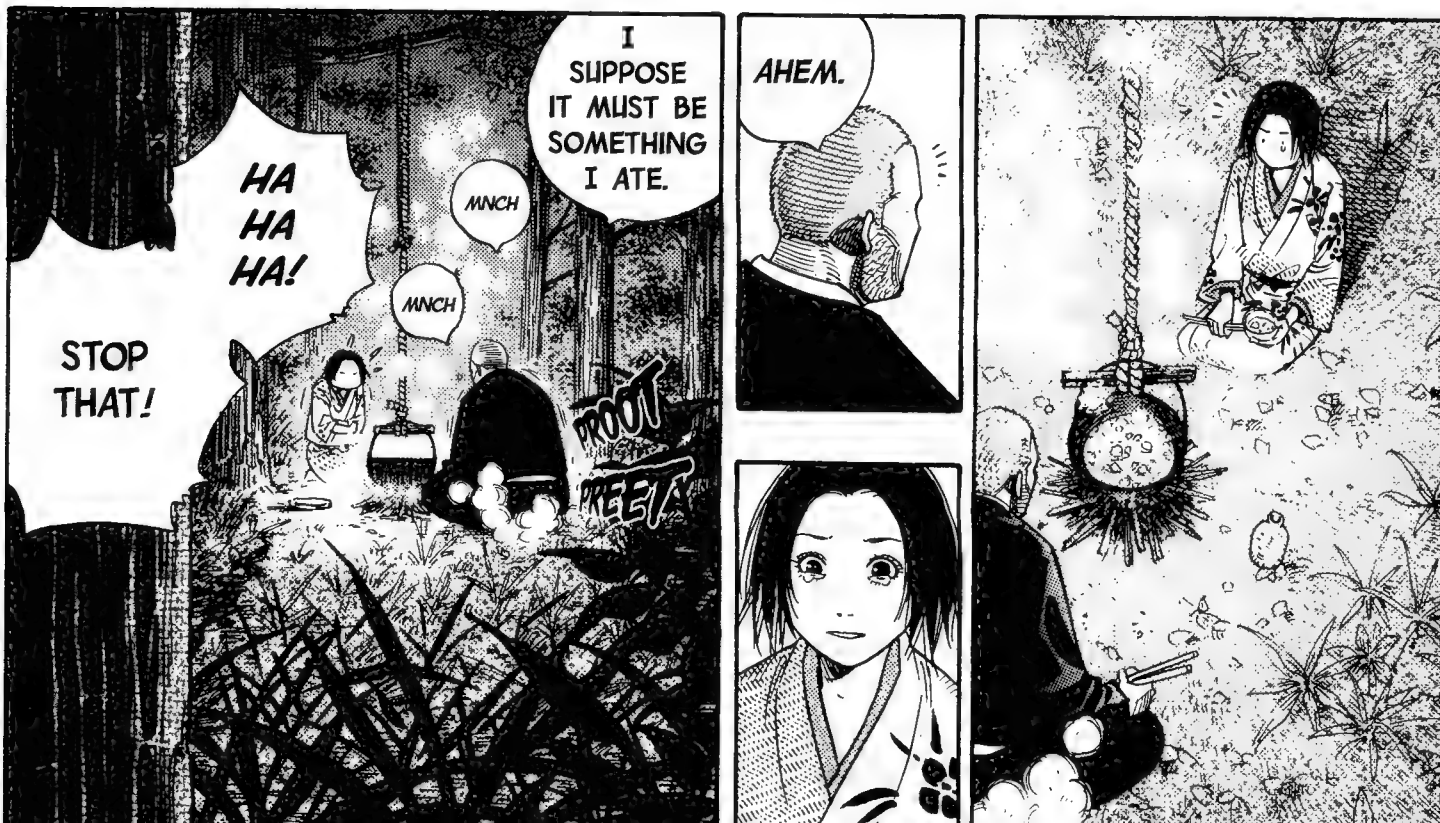

...
SOB!
I'M SO UPSET.
SO YOU...
...WEREN'T AFRAID OF TAKEZŌ?
OF COURSE NOT.


THIS IS VERY PECULIAR.
OTSŪ...


HUH?


...BECAUSE HE CONTINUED TO BE TAKEZŌ'S FRIEND?
YOU LIKED MATAHACHI ...
UH-HUH.
SNIFF
SNIFFL


HMM...
PROOT


I SUPPOSE IT MUST BE SOMETHING I ATE.
MNCH
MNCH
HA HA HA!
STOP THAT!
PROOT
PREET
AHEM.


THERE'S NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF. WE'RE WAY OUT HERE IN THE MOUNTAINS.
PROOT
NO WAY!!
OTSŪ! YOU SHOULD HAVE SOME MORE STEW, TOO!
COME ON!
WE'RE ONLY HUMAN.
HA HA HA HA

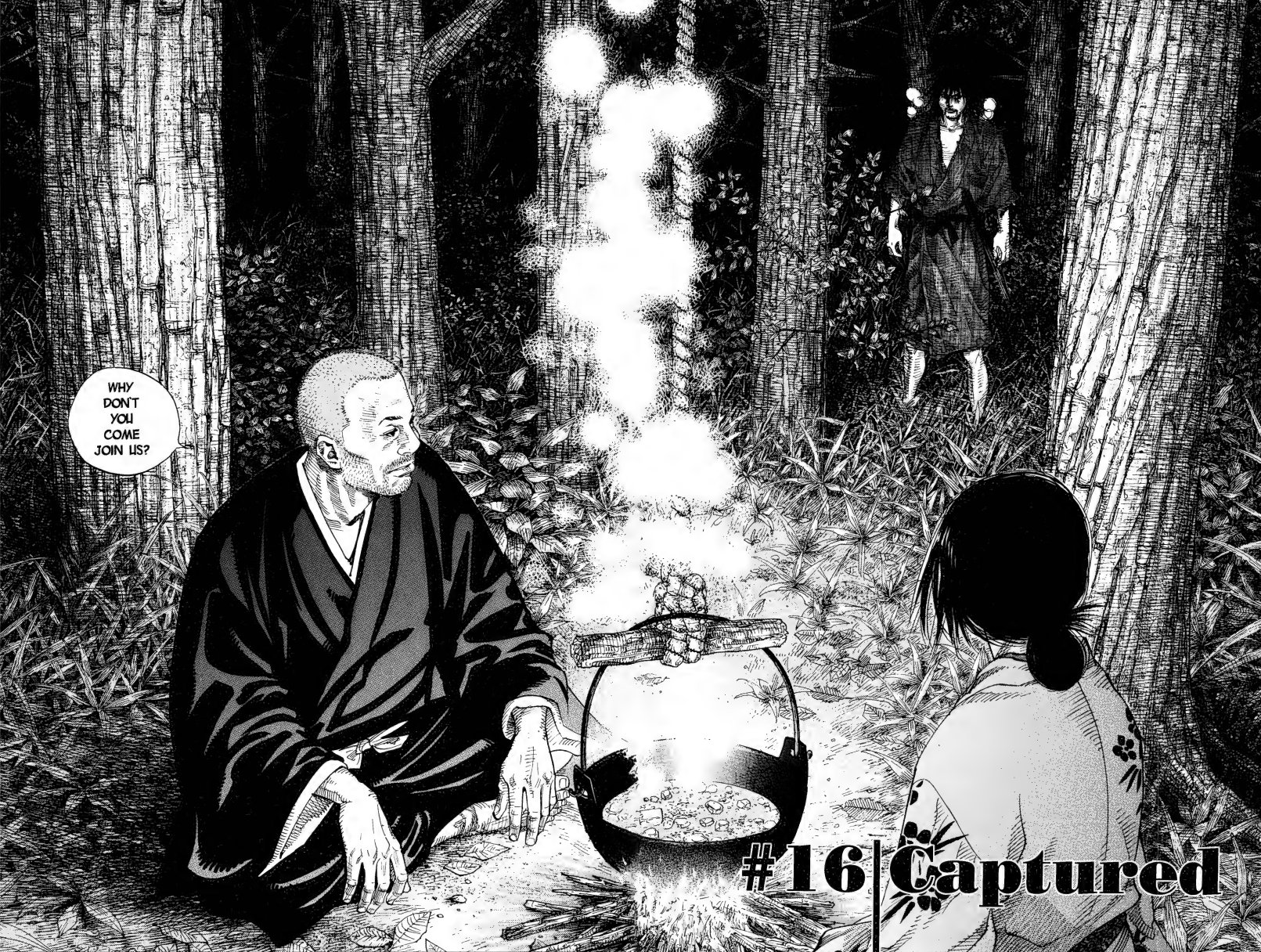

!!


ISN'T THAT RIGHT, TAKEZŌ?
HUH?

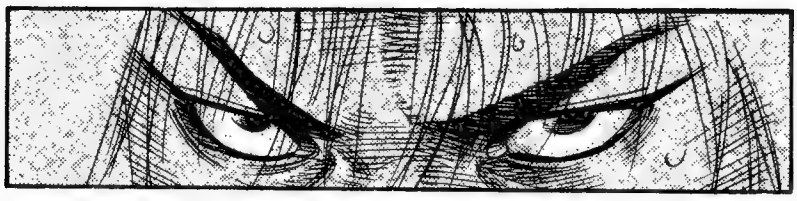

Vagabond


ポーン
(PROOT!)


HUH?
...ISN'T THAT RIGHT, TAKEZŌ?
!!


WHY DON'T YOU COME JOIN US?
#16 Captured


HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF






OTSŪ, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
...
...OTS--
...


YOU CAN'T EVEN SPEAK...
...


HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
TAKEZŌ, YOU LOOK COMPLETELY WORN OUT...
YOU CAN BARELY STAND.


WE'RE HERE TO CAPTURE YOU.

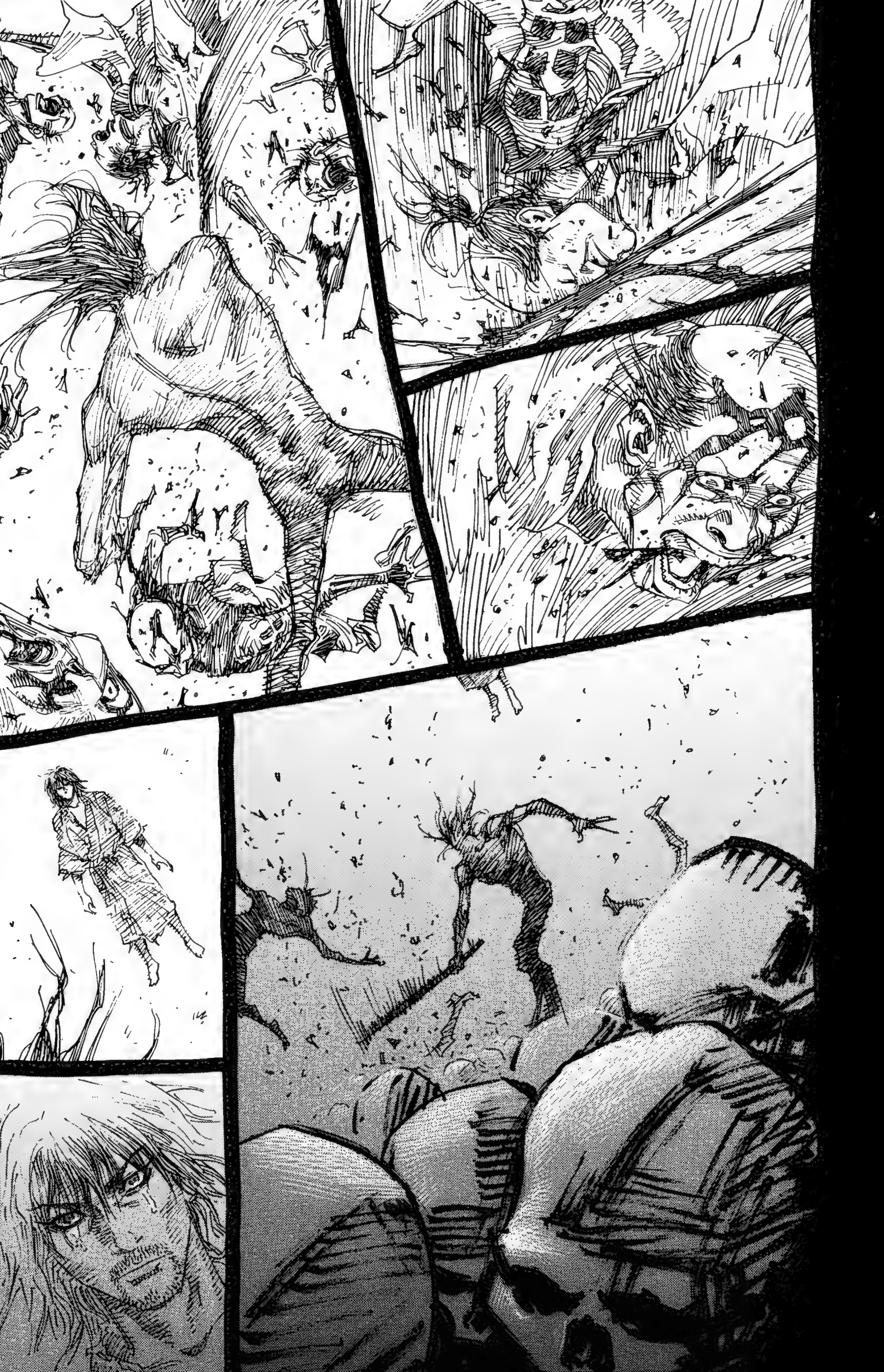

HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
...




YOU DEVIL!!
BEAST!!
YOU'RE EVIL!!
DEMON!!


BASTARD!!
KILL HIM!!
KILL HIM!!
CUT HIM DOWN!!
KILL HIM!!






...



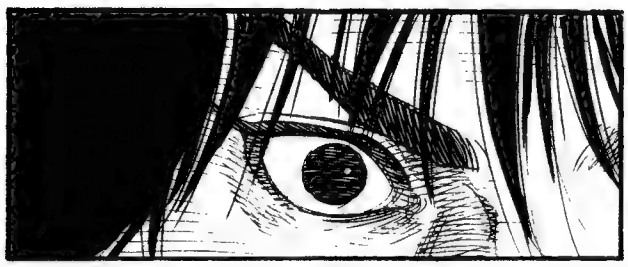

OTSŪ.
O--
...




ARE
YOU JUST
LIKE THE
OTHERS...?


TAKEZŌ.


WHO'S OKŌ?




WHAT'S SHE LIKE?




HUH?

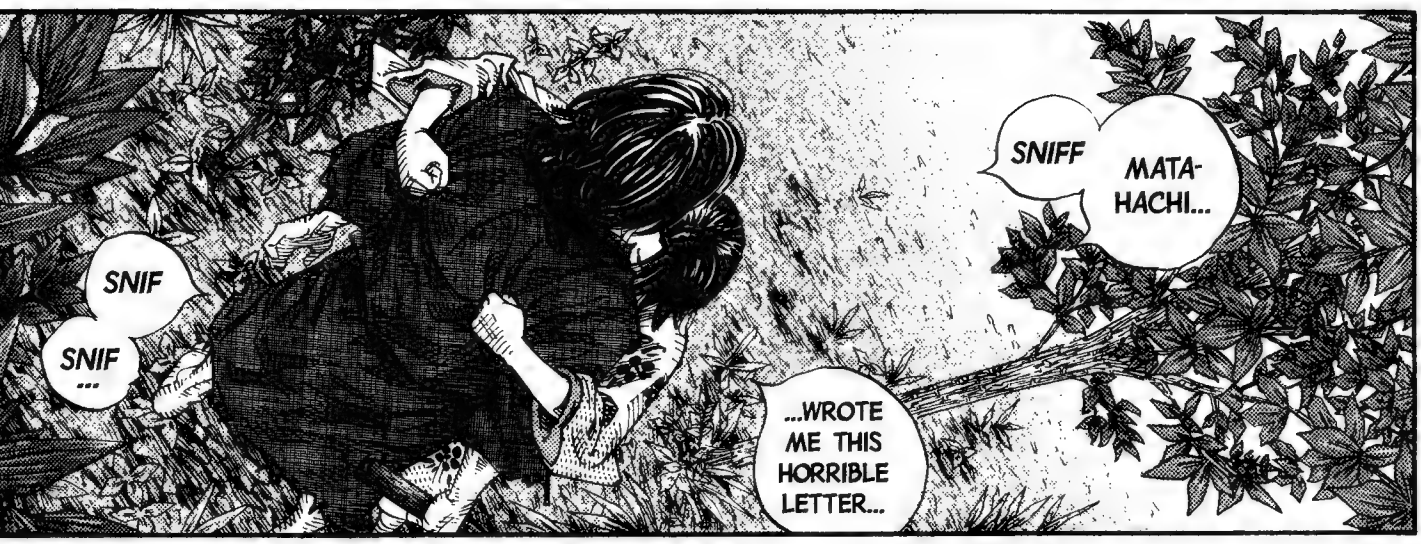






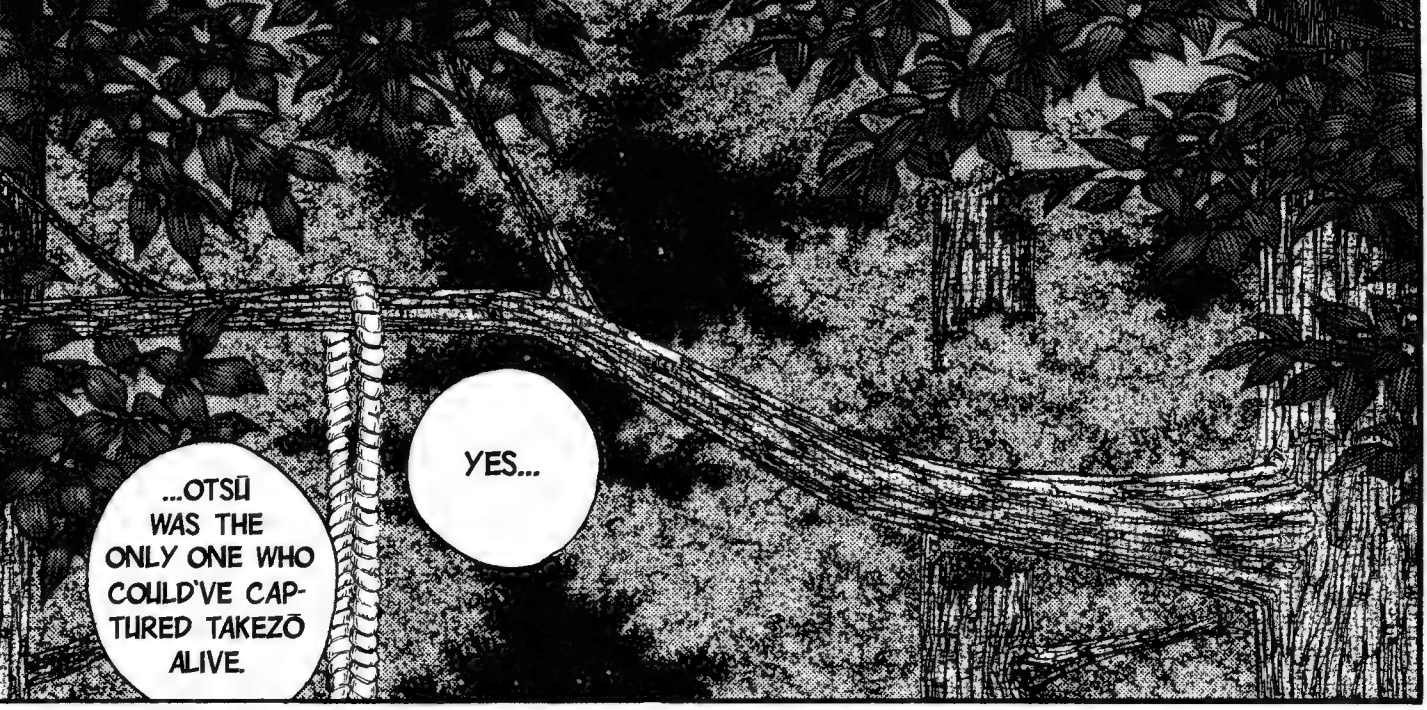



SNIFF
TAKEZŌ.
SNIF

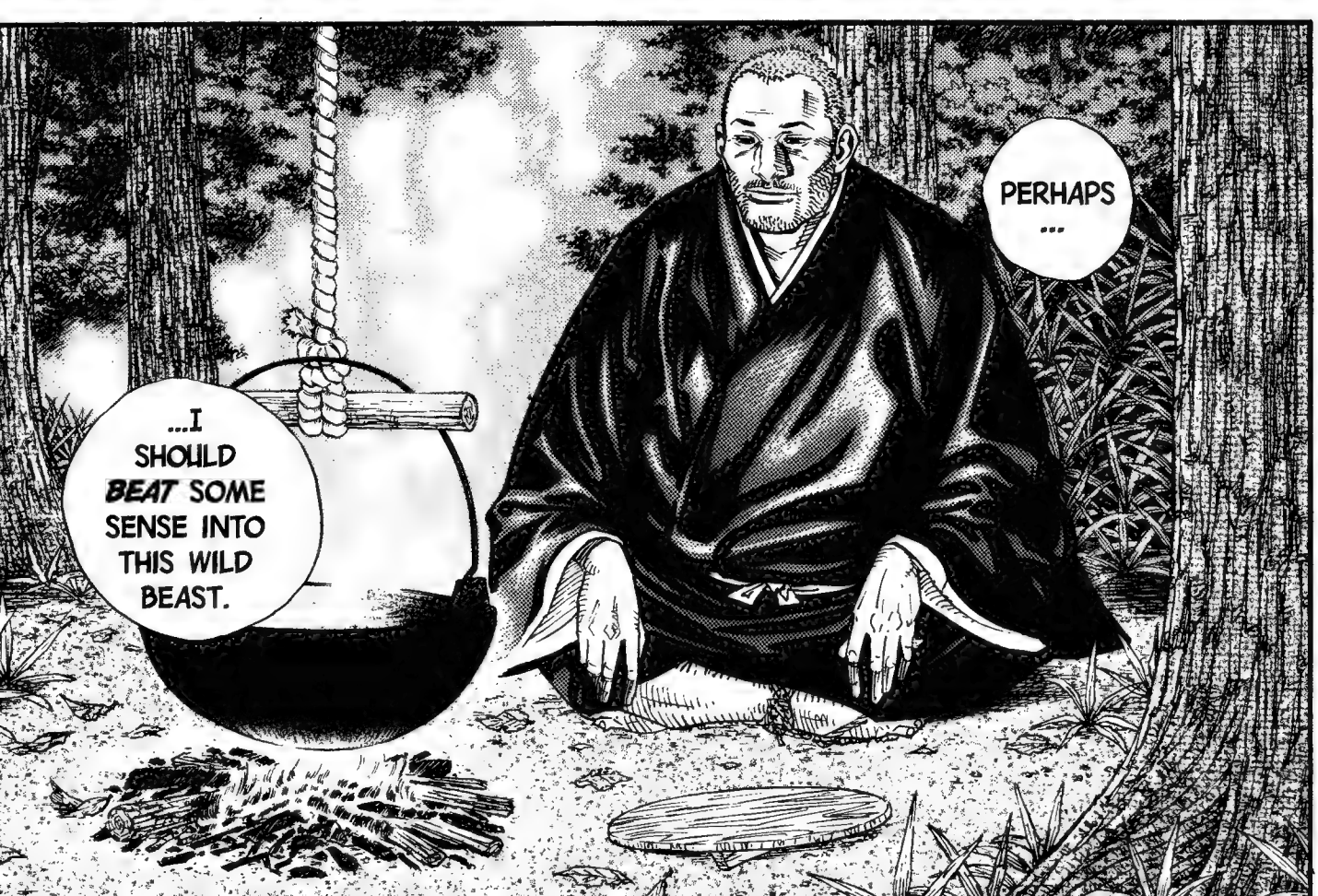

SNIFF
MATA-
HACHI...
SNIF
SNIF
...
...WROTE
ME THIS
HORRIBLE
LETTER...


I'VE
BEEN
ABANDONED...
...AGAIN.




...OTSŪ WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD'VE CAPTURED TAKEZŌ ALIVE.
YES...


A SERMON'S THE *LAST* THING TAKEZŌ WOULD LISTEN TO.
NOW WHAT KIND OF SERMON SHALL I GIVE TAKEZŌ...?
NO...


...I SHOULD *BEAT* SOME SENSE INTO THIS WILD BEAST.
PERHAPS ...


HE'S STARVED AND EXHAUSTED FROM HIDING OUT...
I JUST MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO IT.


...IT LOOKS AS IF I DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING AT ALL.

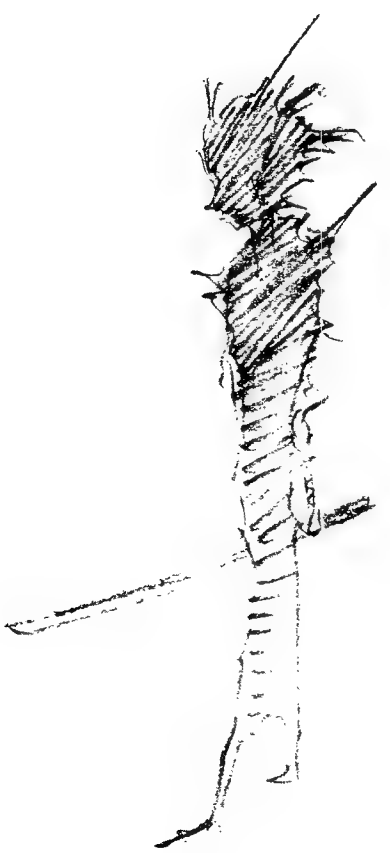

HOW-EVER...


OTSŪ IS THE STRONGEST ONE OF US ALL.


OTSŪ ISN'T SCARED OF YOU AT ALL...
...TAKEZŌ.
HE PASSED OUT...


OTSŪ, YOU'VE MANAGED TO CAPTURE TAKEZŌ.

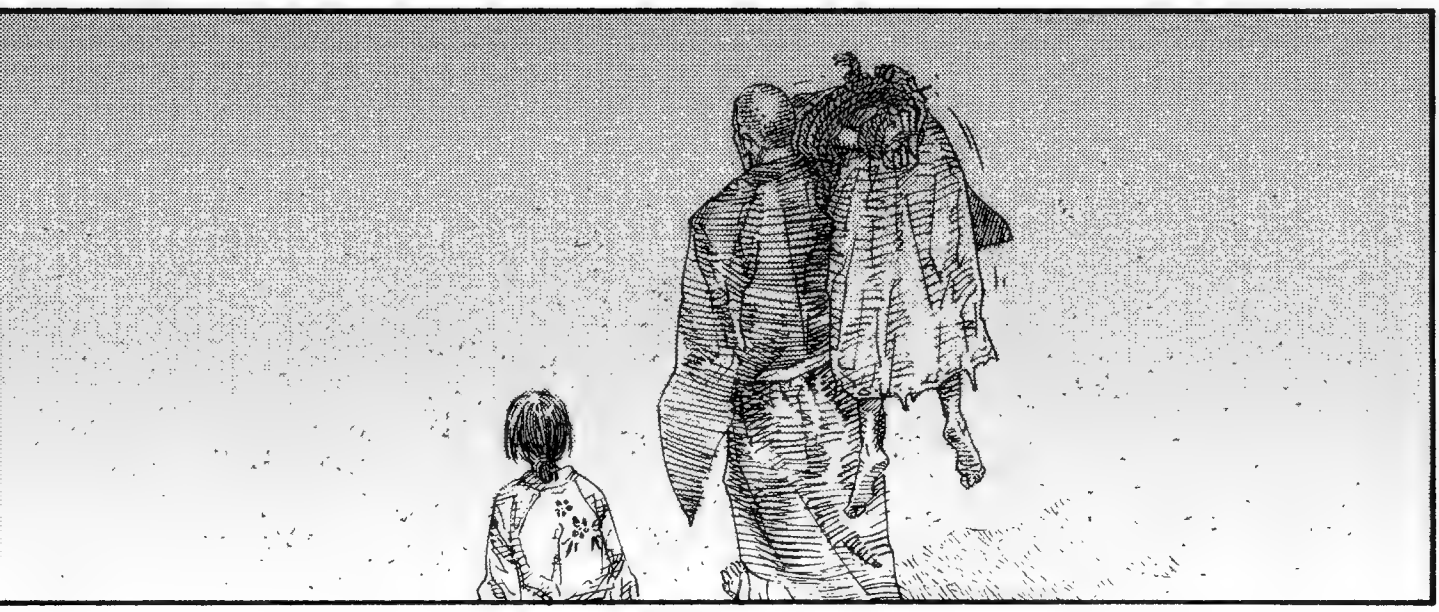

Vagabond



PAIN...

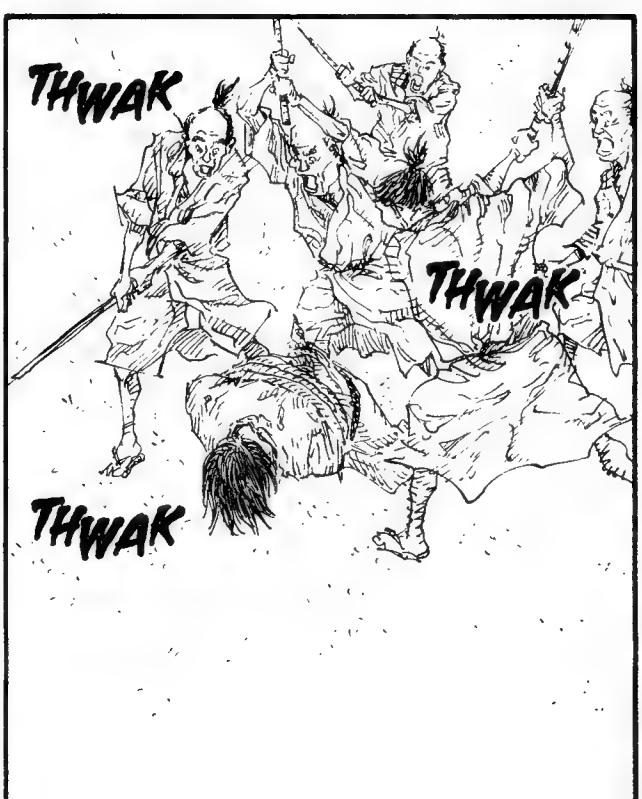
THWAK

THWAK





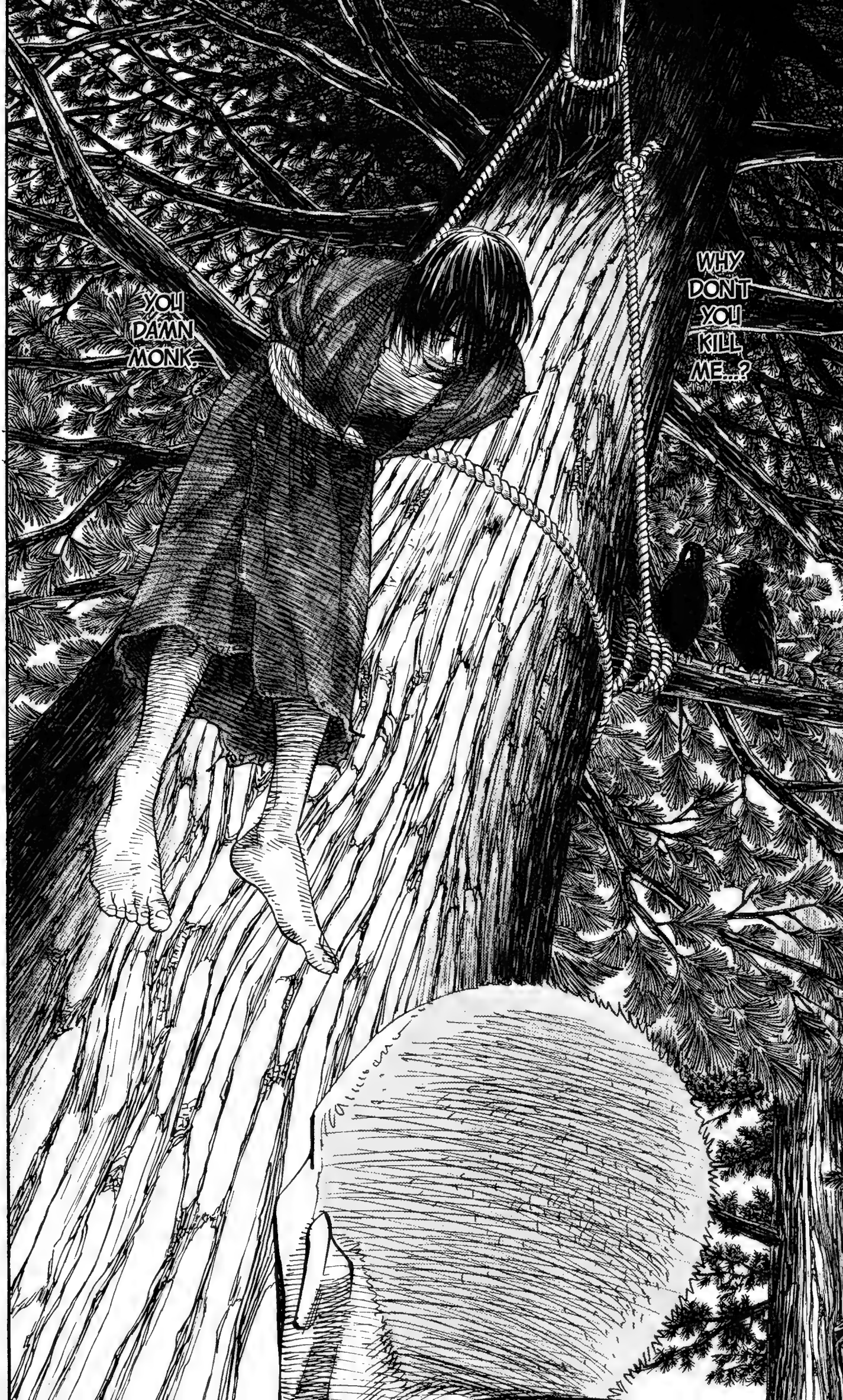
PAIN.







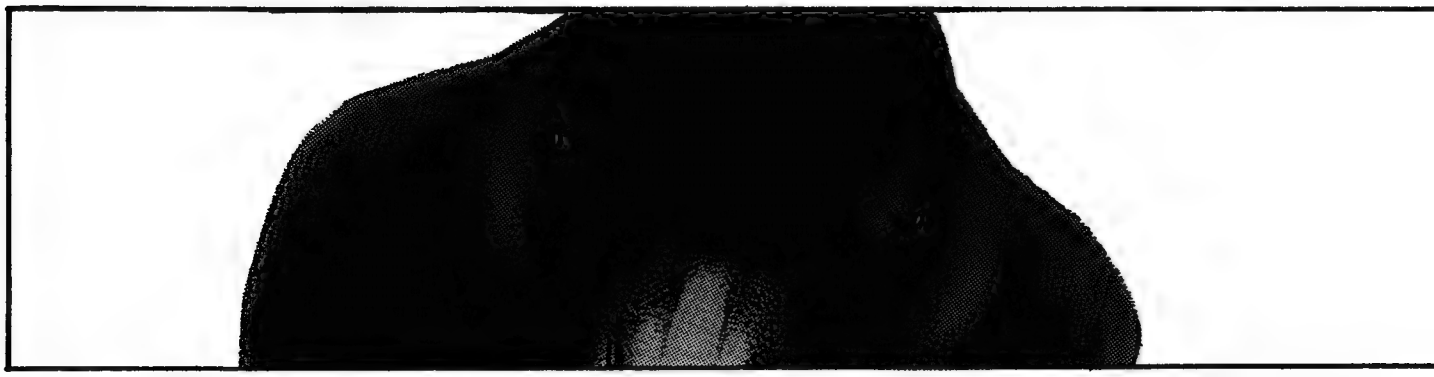
#17 Invincible Under the Sun


YOU DAMN MONK.
WHY DON'T YOU KILL ME...?

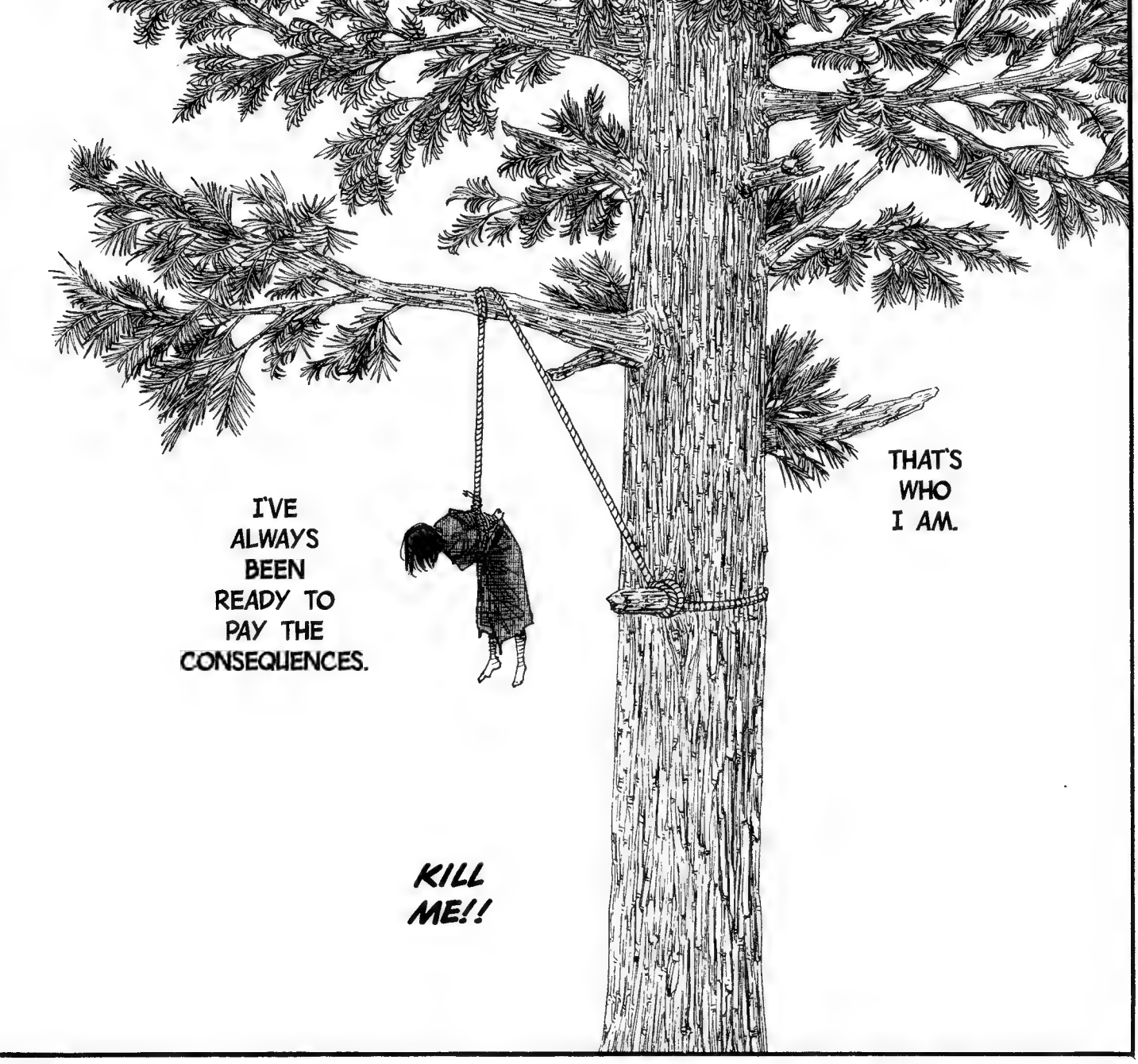

KILL ME.
HMM...
SO YOU'RE STILL ALIVE...
GET IT OVER WITH AND KILL ME!!
KAW
ZHOOP
WHY...PUT ME THROUGH THIS HUMILIATION...?
TP
TP

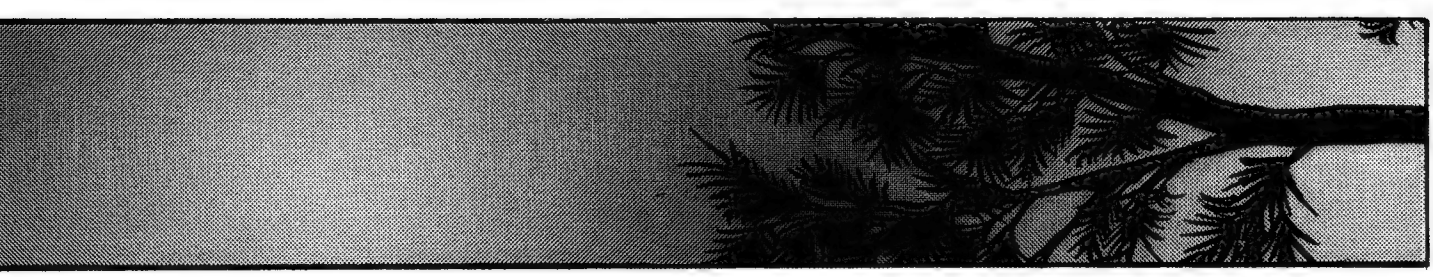

KAWW

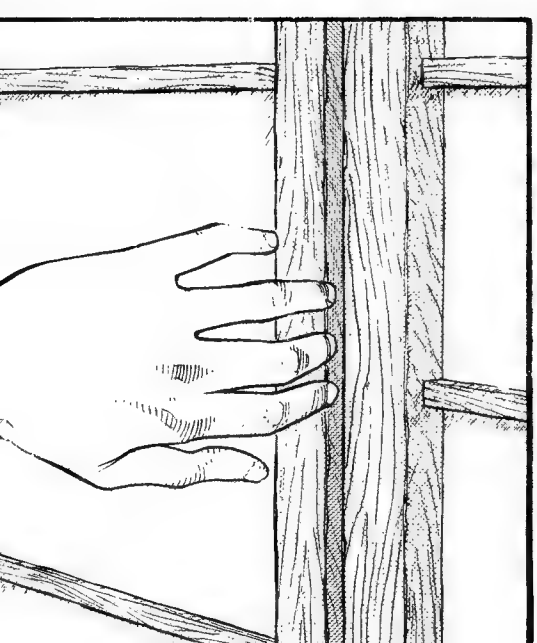

KILL OR
BE KILLED...




CUT PEOPLE
DOWN AND DIE
IN MORTAL
COMBAT...


I'VE ALWAYS BEEN READY TO PAY THE CONSEQUENCES.
THAT'S WHO I AM.
KILL ME!!






FSSHHHHHHH


GASP
I TOLD YOU NOT TO GO OUT THERE.
IF YOU SEE TAKEZŌ UP IN THAT TREE...
...WON'T YOU BE TEMPTED TO CUT HIM LOOSE?
BUT!
IT'S POURING OUTSIDE!!
OTSŪ...
THAT'S WHY YOU MUST NOT GO.
UH-HUH.

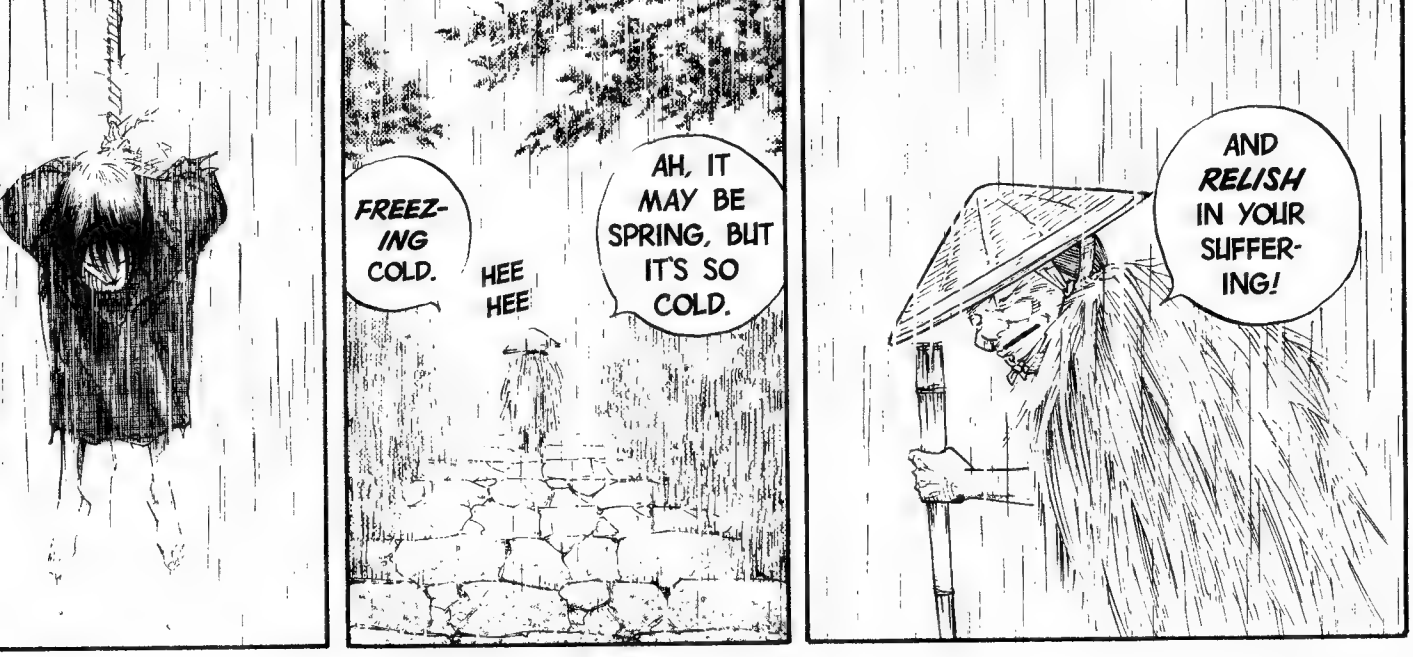

I FEEL LIKE I TRICKED HIM.
OH, TAKEZŌ...
TAKEZŌ DOESN'T FEEL THAT WAY.
FSSSHH


GLEAM
WHAT A PLEASANT SIGHT.
GLEAM

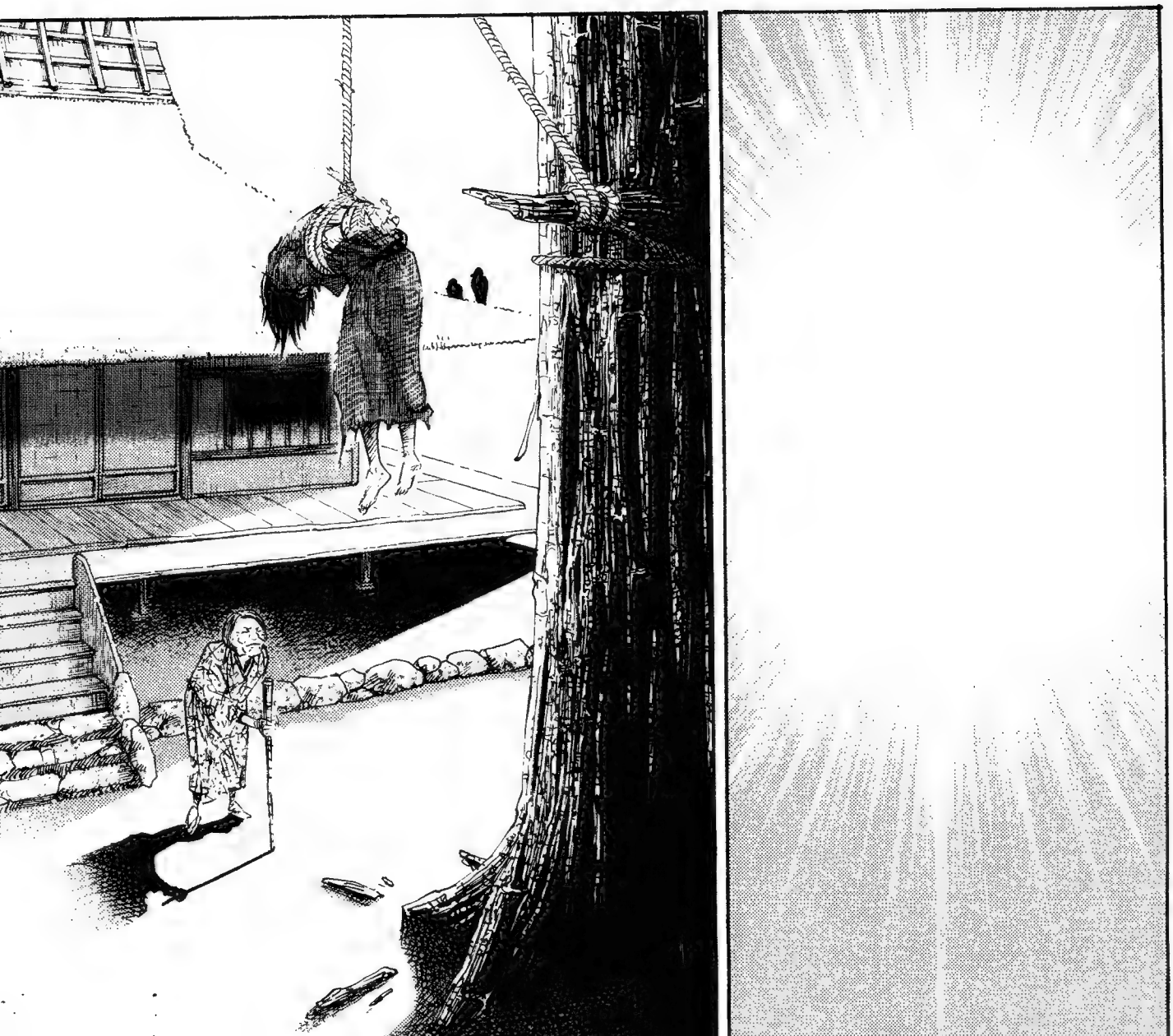

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU DIE UP THERE!!
I'M GOING TO CHECK UP ON YOU EVERY DAY...


THE HON'IDEN FAMILY HAS LOST ITS PRECIOUS HEIR BECAUSE OF *YOU.*
YOU MADE UP THAT STORY ABOUT HIM LIVING SOMEWHERE WITH SOME WOMAN.
I'LL FIND OUT FOR MYSELF WHETHER HE'S ALIVE OR NOT.

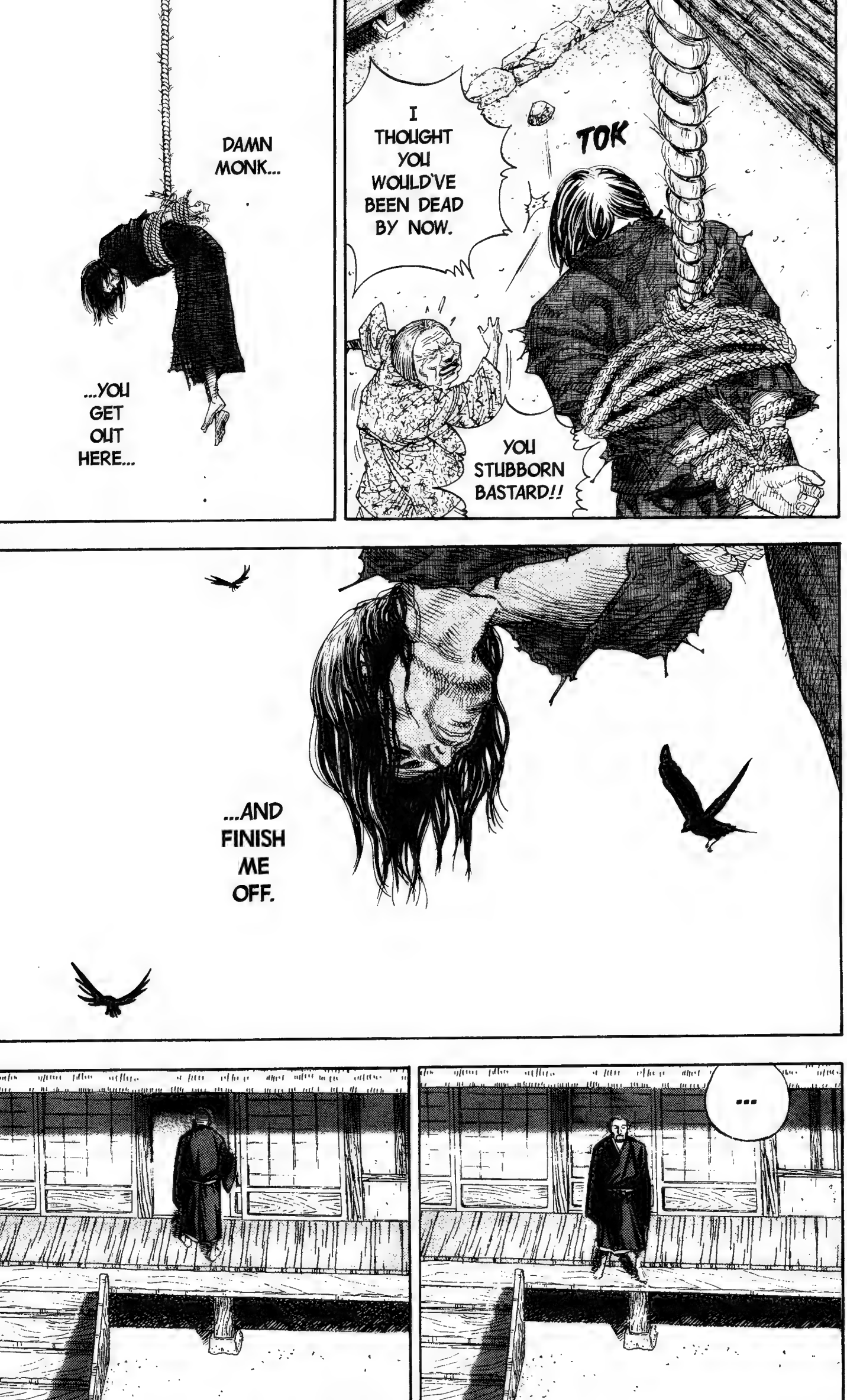

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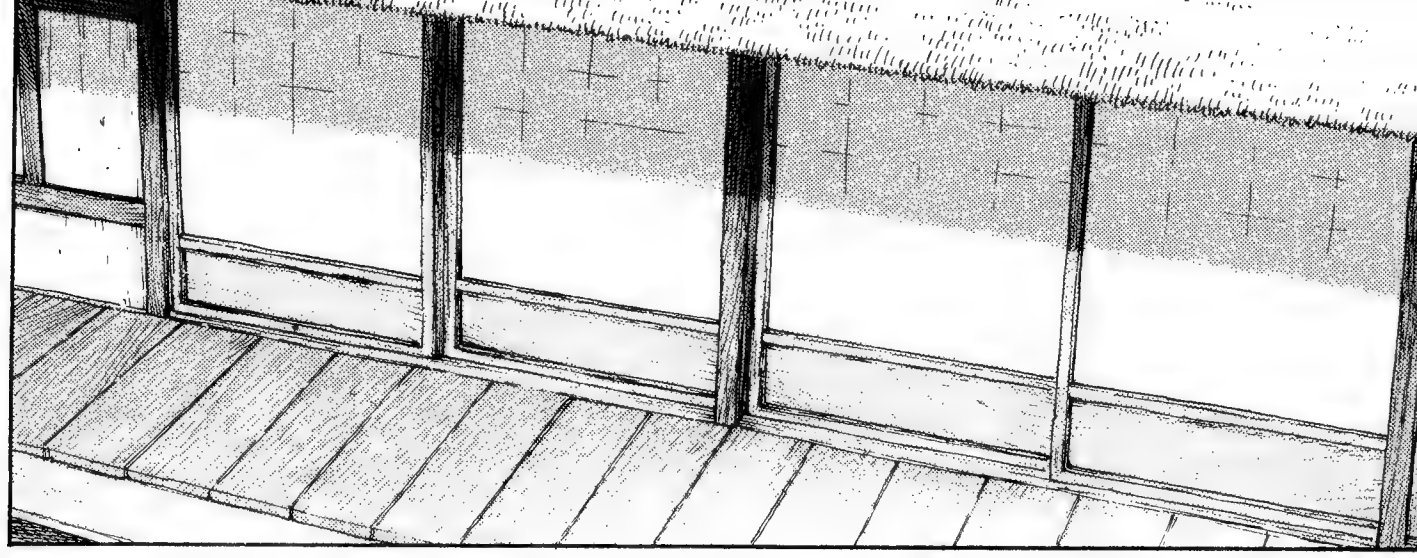

FREEZ-
ING
COLD.
HEE
HEE
AH, IT
MAY BE
SPRING, BUT
IT'S SO
COLD.
AND
RELISH
IN YOUR
SUFFER-
ING!

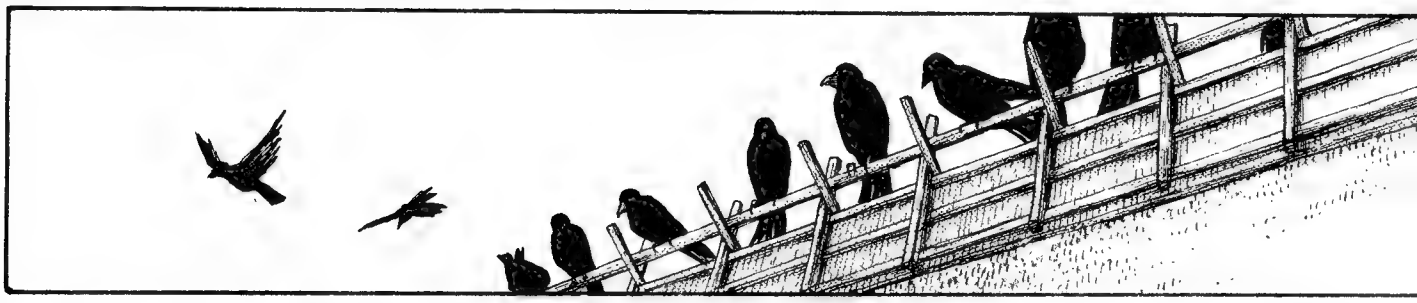

FSSHHHH




AREN'T YOU DEAD YET?
HUH?!
PTU!!
OH!!
ACK!!


DAMN MONK...
...YOU GET OUT HERE...
I THOUGHT YOU WOULD'VE BEEN DEAD BY NOW.
TOK
YOU STUBBORN BASTARD!!
...AND FINISH ME OFF.
...






HOW DID I END UP LIKE THIS...?


YOU ARE THE WEAKEST PERSON IN THIS VILLAGE.
IT'S NOT TRUE.
I NEVER LOST TO ANYONE.


I JUST...
I JUST WANTED TO BECOME STRONGER.




SHE'S NO LONGER YOUR MOTHER.

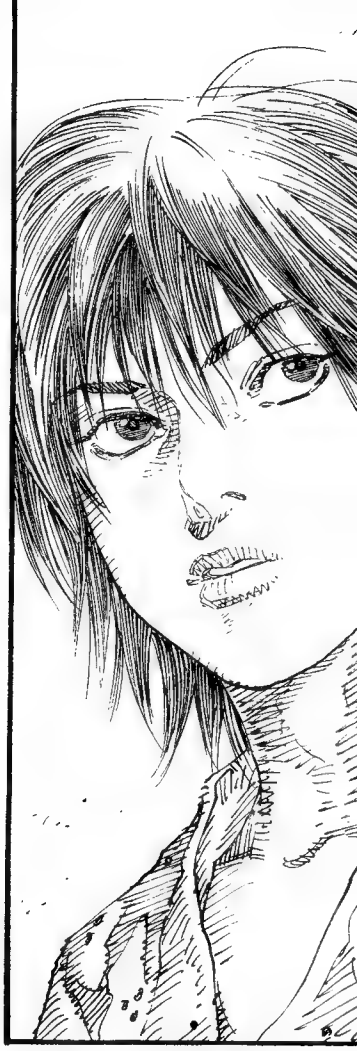


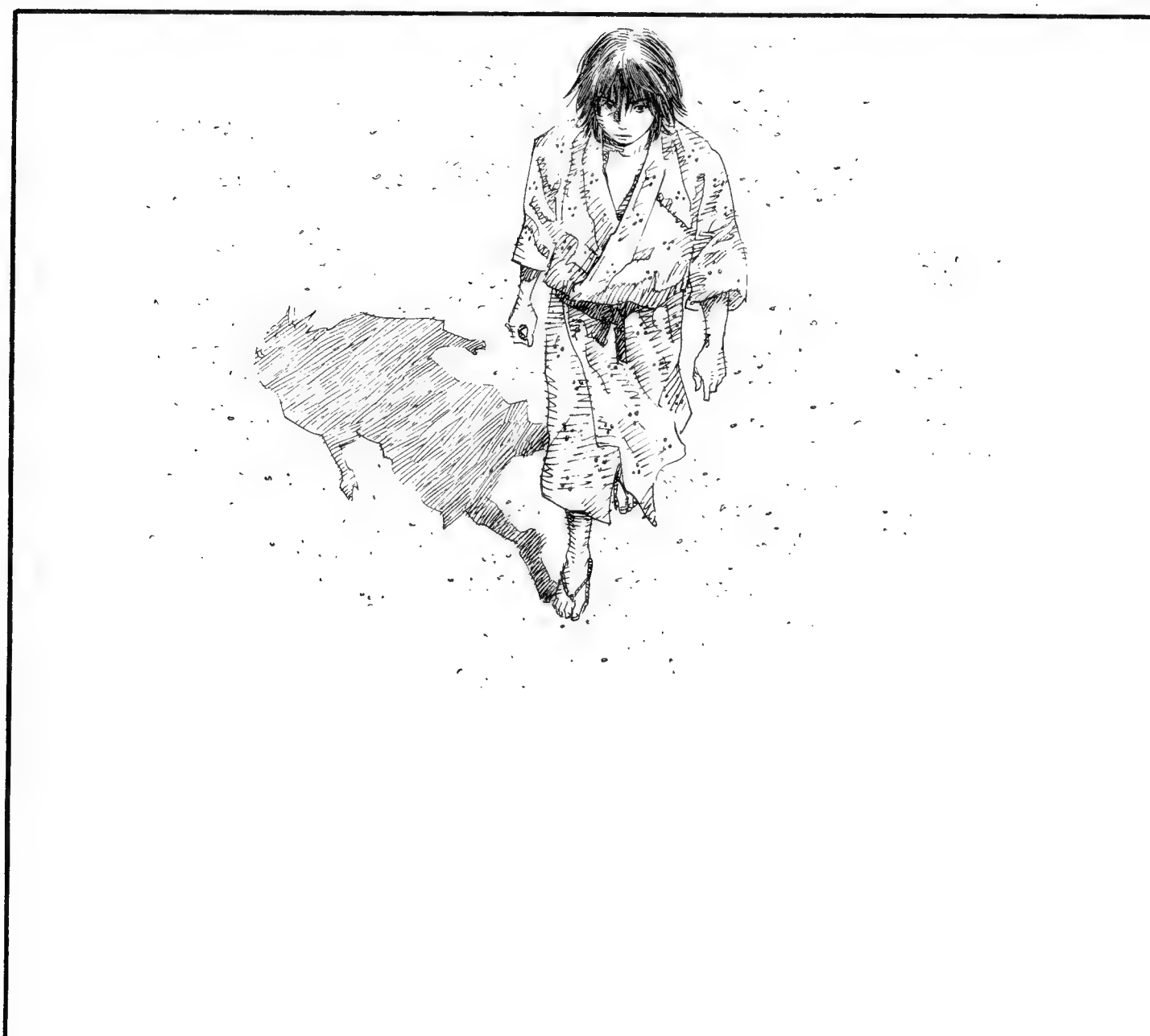


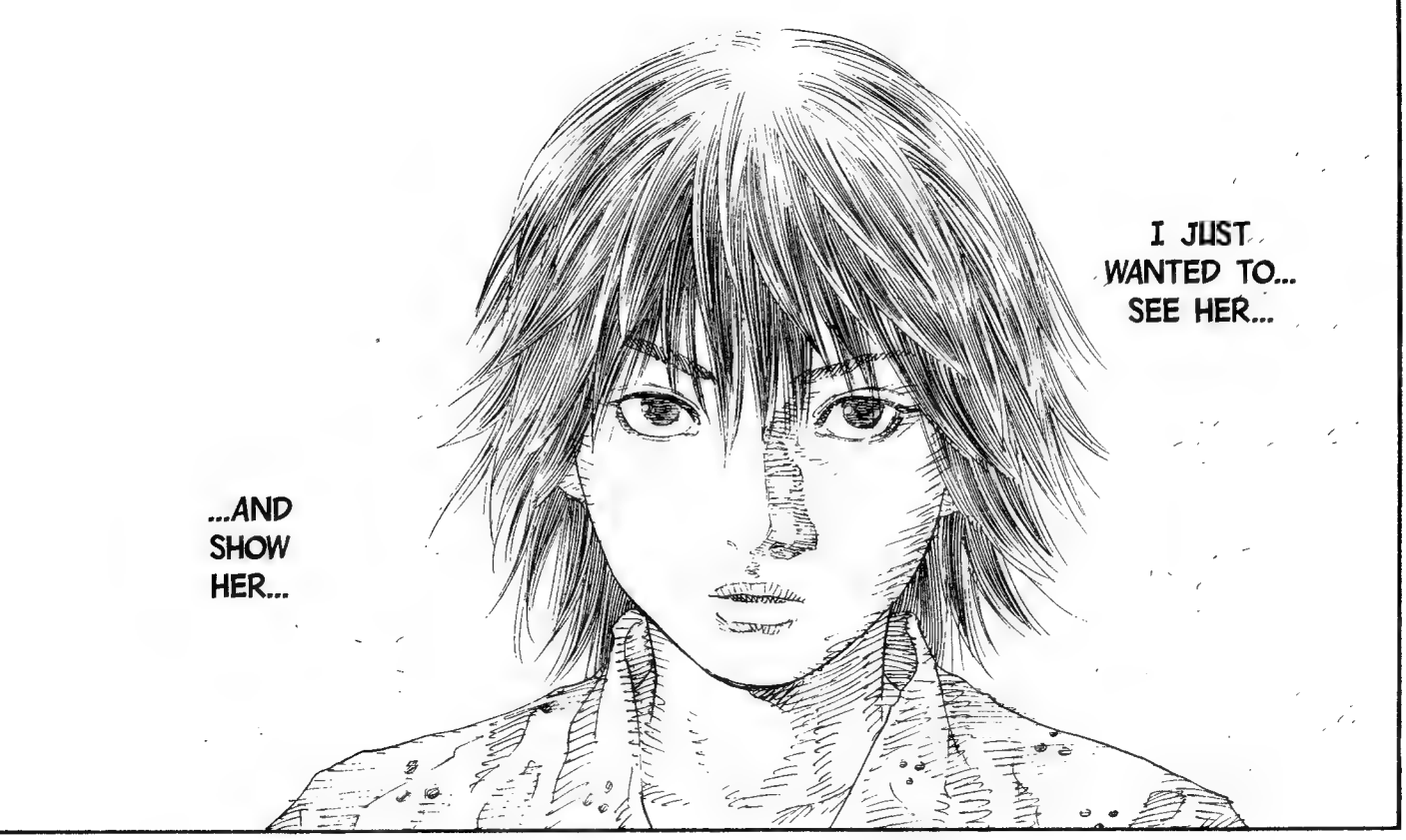






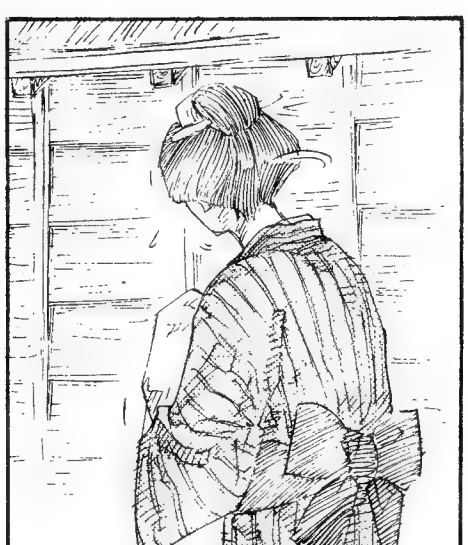





I JUST WANTED TO... SEE HER...
...AND SHOW HER...

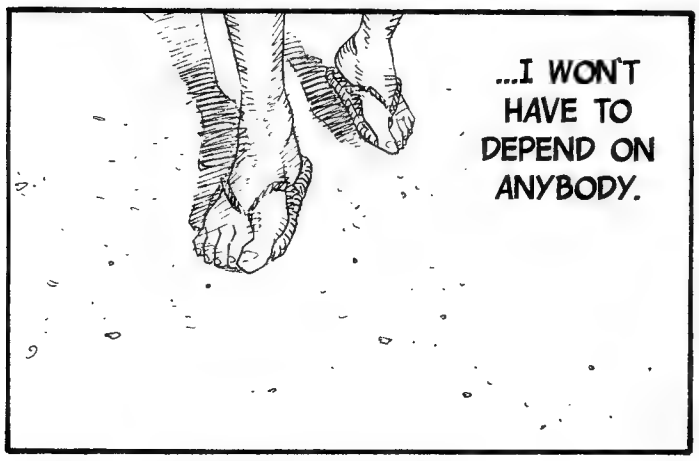

...HOW MUCH I'D GROWN.
TAKEZŌ...!


YOU *MUST* GO HOME...
...TO YOUR FATHER.

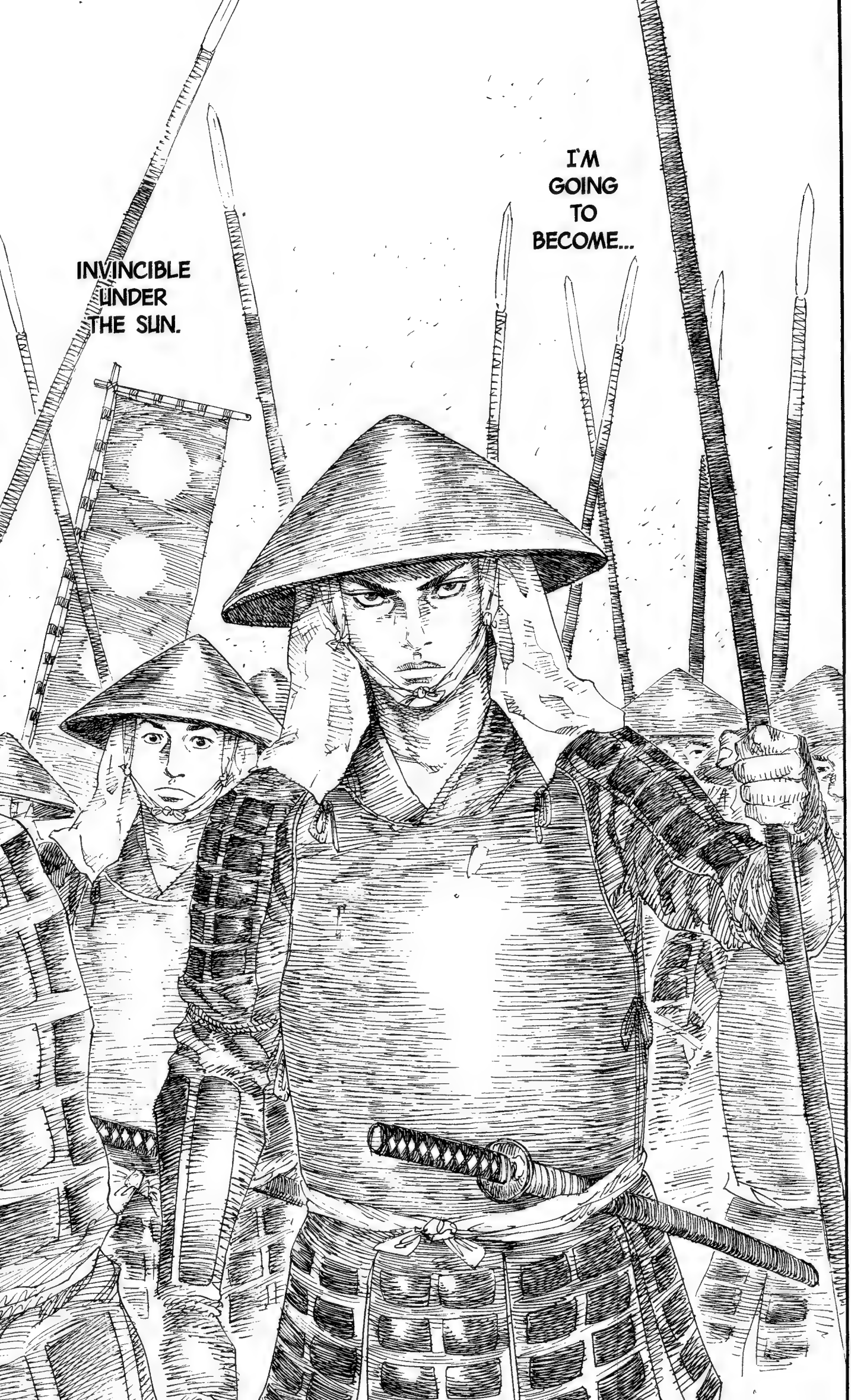



I WANT
TO BE
STRONG
SO THAT...


I *HAVE*
TO BECOME
STRONGER...


...I WON'T
HAVE TO
DEPEND ON
ANYBODY.

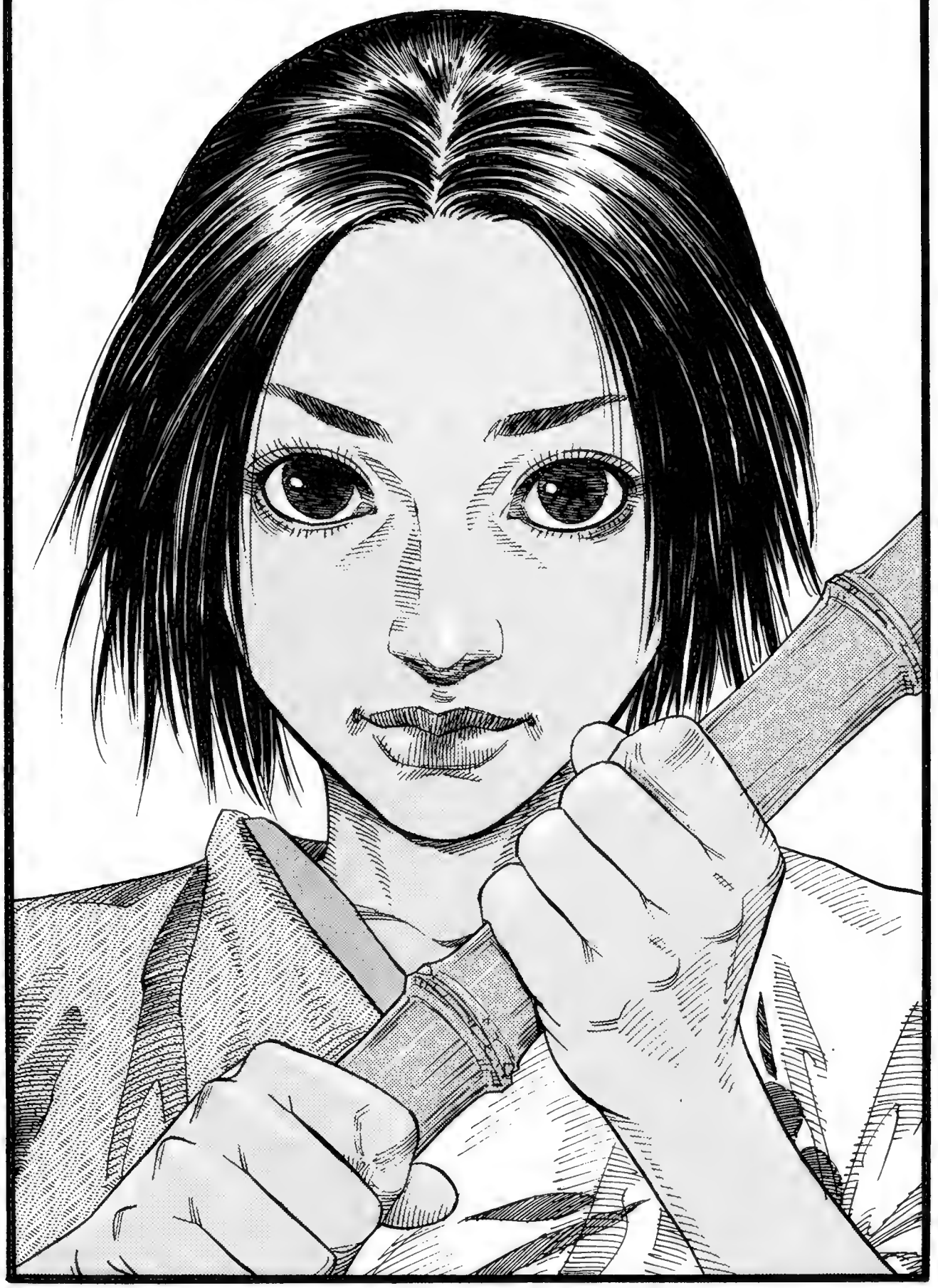

...I'LL
BECOME
STRONGER...
YES...


I'M GOING TO BECOME...
INVINCIBLE UNDER THE SUN.

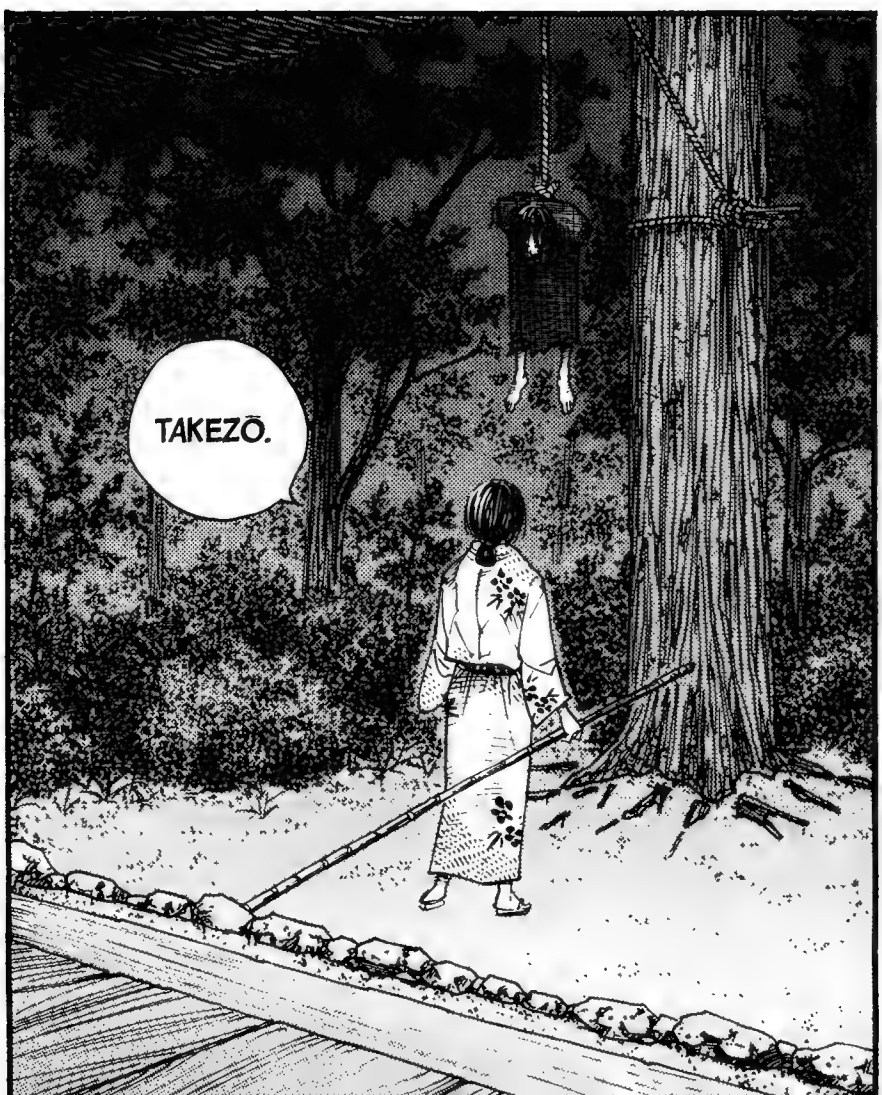

THAT'S ALL I WANTED.


...

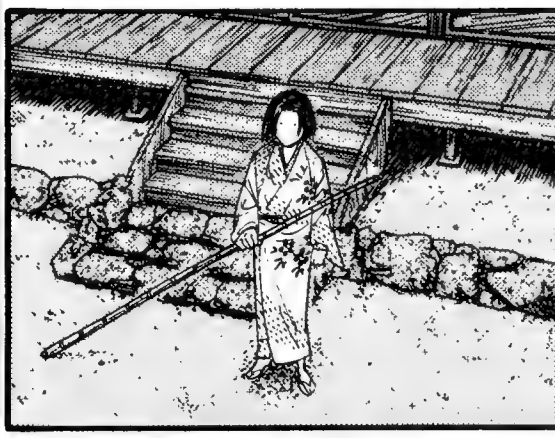
#18 Tree of Shame






TAKEZŌ.



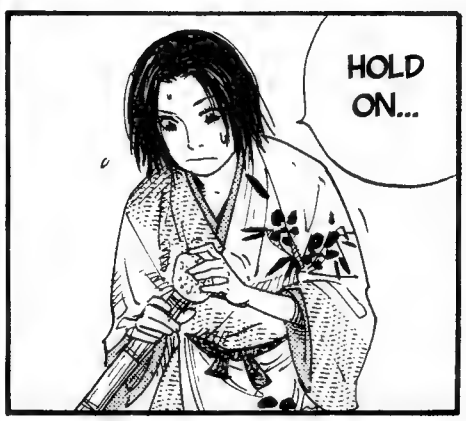


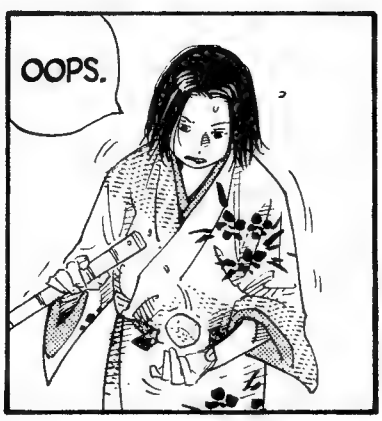

OTSŪ...


LOOK WHAT I MANAGED TO SNEAK OUT...
RICE!


HERE...
THERE YOU GO...
...TAKEZŌ.




HOLD ON...


OOPS.

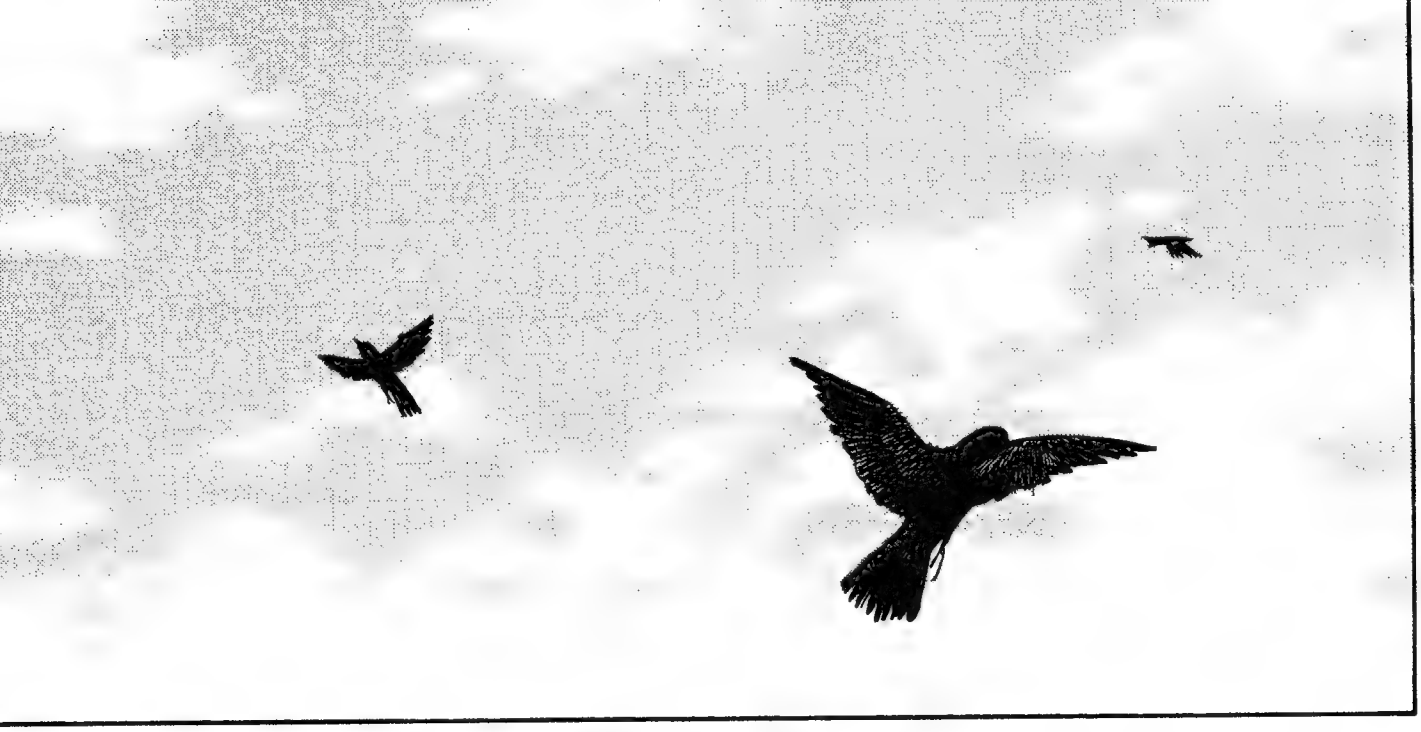

OKAY ...
EASY NOW...
WUP


...
OTSU...
DON'T BOTHER WITH ME.
D--
DON'T--
TAKUAN'S FORBIDDEN ME...
...TO CUT YOU LOOSE.
IF YOU DON'T EAT...
...YOU'LL DIE.
FWUP


WHAK
!
AHH!?
PLUP

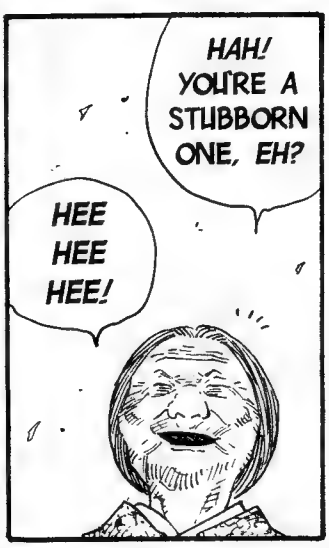

ZHOOP
WHAT'S GOING ON OUT HERE...?
DON'T BOTHER WITH ME.
OH, NO!!
GASP!
!!
YAWN...
TP TP TP
TAKEZŌ!
I'LL BE BACK TOMOR-ROW!
SORRY!
...
TP TP
DAMN MONK...

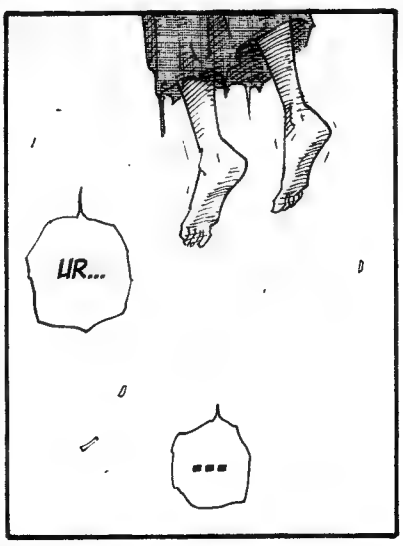

HURRY UP...
...AND KILL ME!!
KRICH
KRICH
KRICH
...
KILL ME...
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
ZHOOP



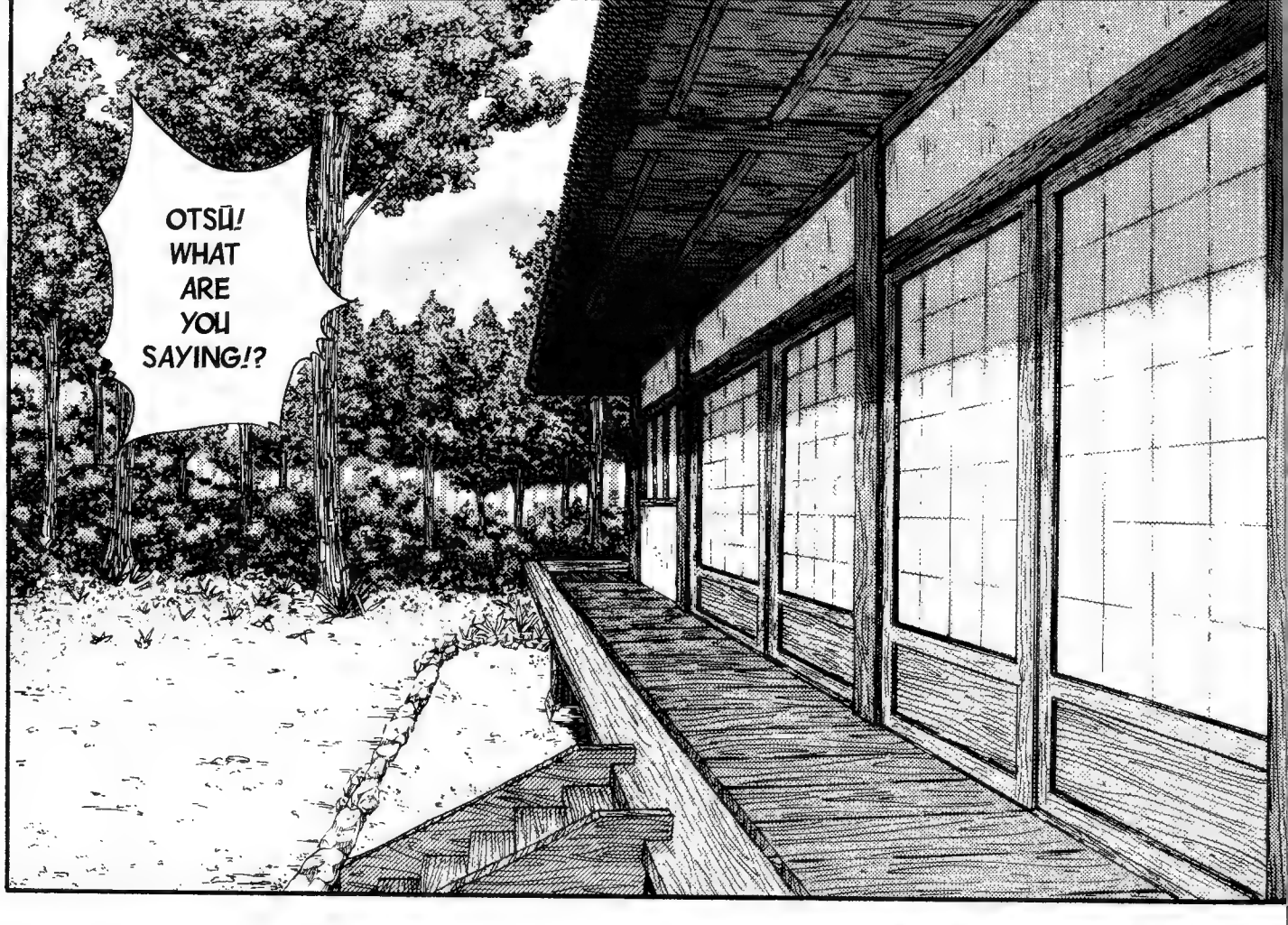

YOU DEAD YET?



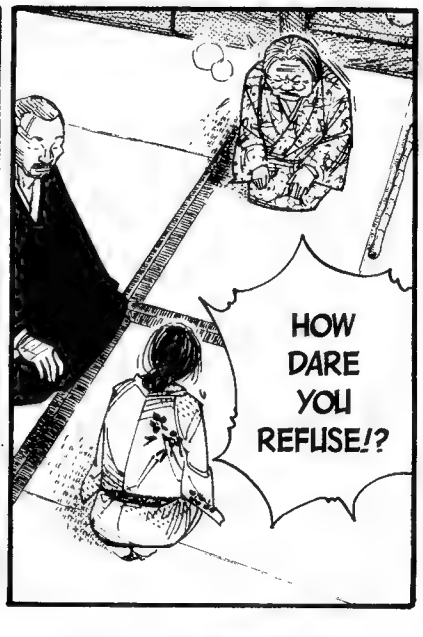

HAH! YOU'RE A STUBBORN ONE, EH?
HEE HEE HEE!


UR...
...

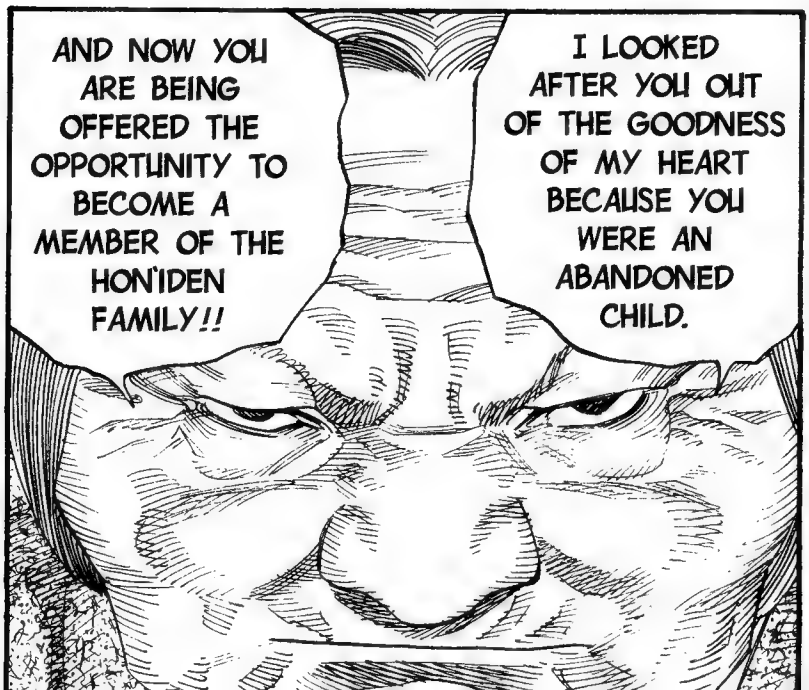

OTSŪ!
OTSŪ!
WHERE'S MY DAUGHTER-IN-LAW!?


OTSŪ! WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!?


COME STAY WITH ME AS MY DAUGHTER-IN-LAW!!
I'M TELLING YOU, IT'S TIME YOU LEAVE THE TEMPLE AND COME LIVE WITH THE HON'IDEN FAMILY.
CAN'T YOU SEE I'M DOING YOU A FAVOR!?


HOW DARE YOU REFUSE!?



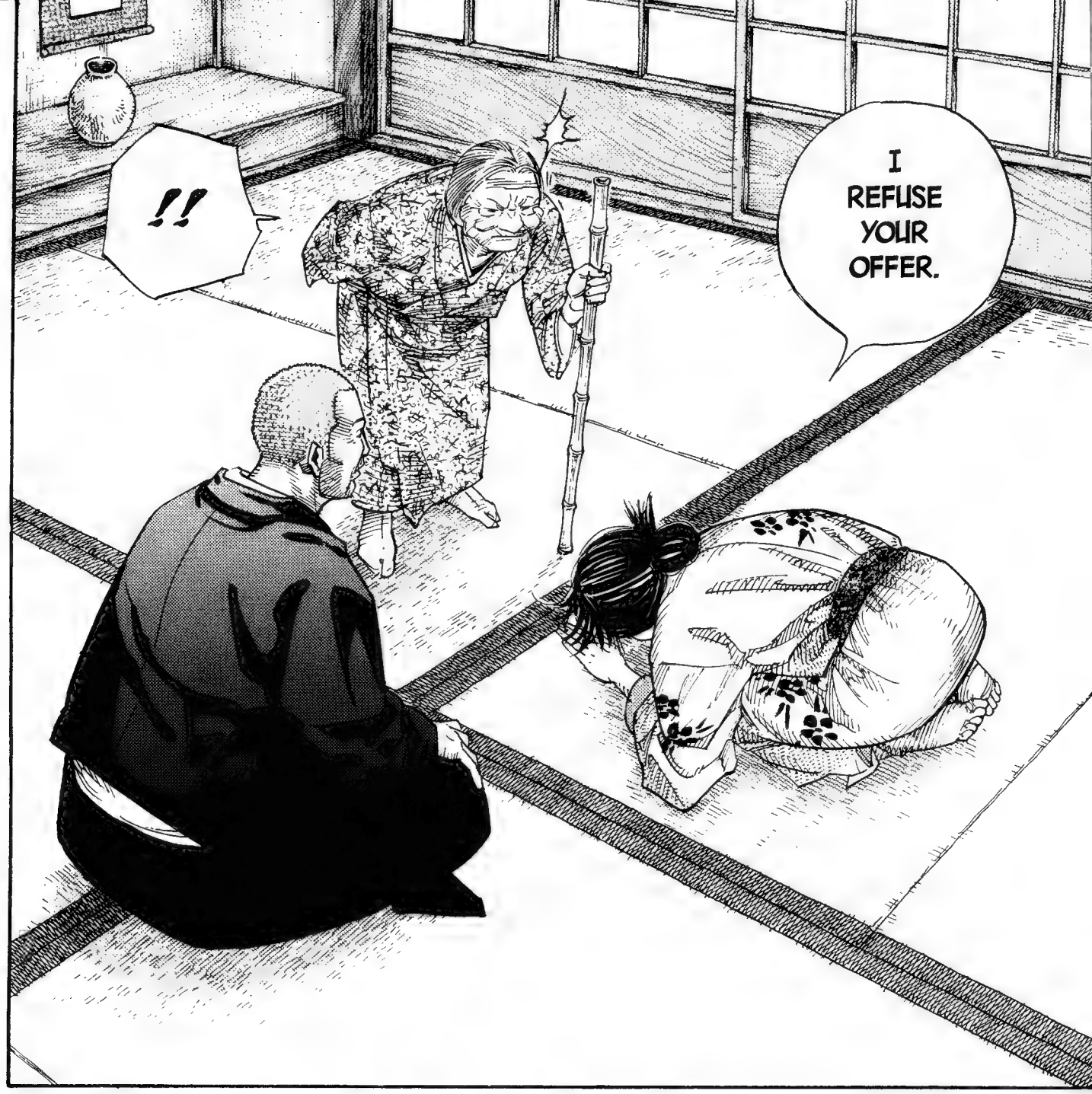

AND NOW YOU ARE BEING OFFERED THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE HON'IDEN FAMILY!!
I LOOKED AFTER YOU OUT OF THE GOODNESS OF MY HEART BECAUSE YOU WERE AN ABANDONED CHILD.

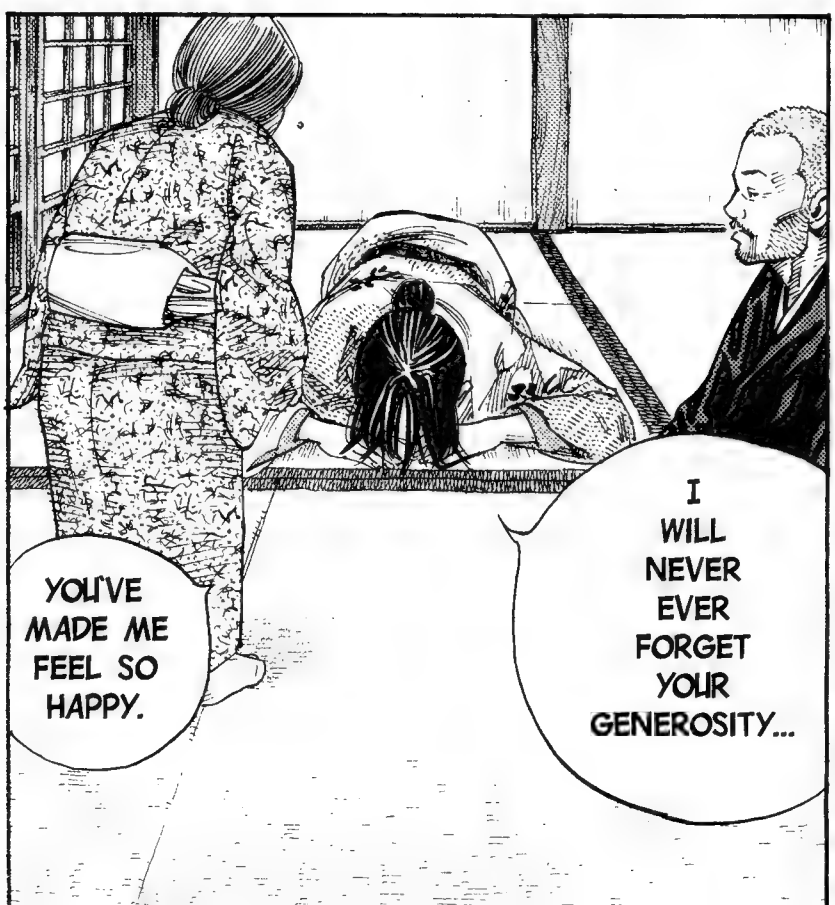

OTSŪ.




MATA-HACHI'S NOT AROUND.
DAUGHTER-IN-LAW!? WHO'S SHE SUPPOSED TO GET MAR-RIED TO?
YOU SHUT UP!! MATAHACHI WILL RETURN!!


...
ALLOW ME TO REPEAT MYSELF.
YOU *MUST* JOIN THE HON'IDEN FAMILY.

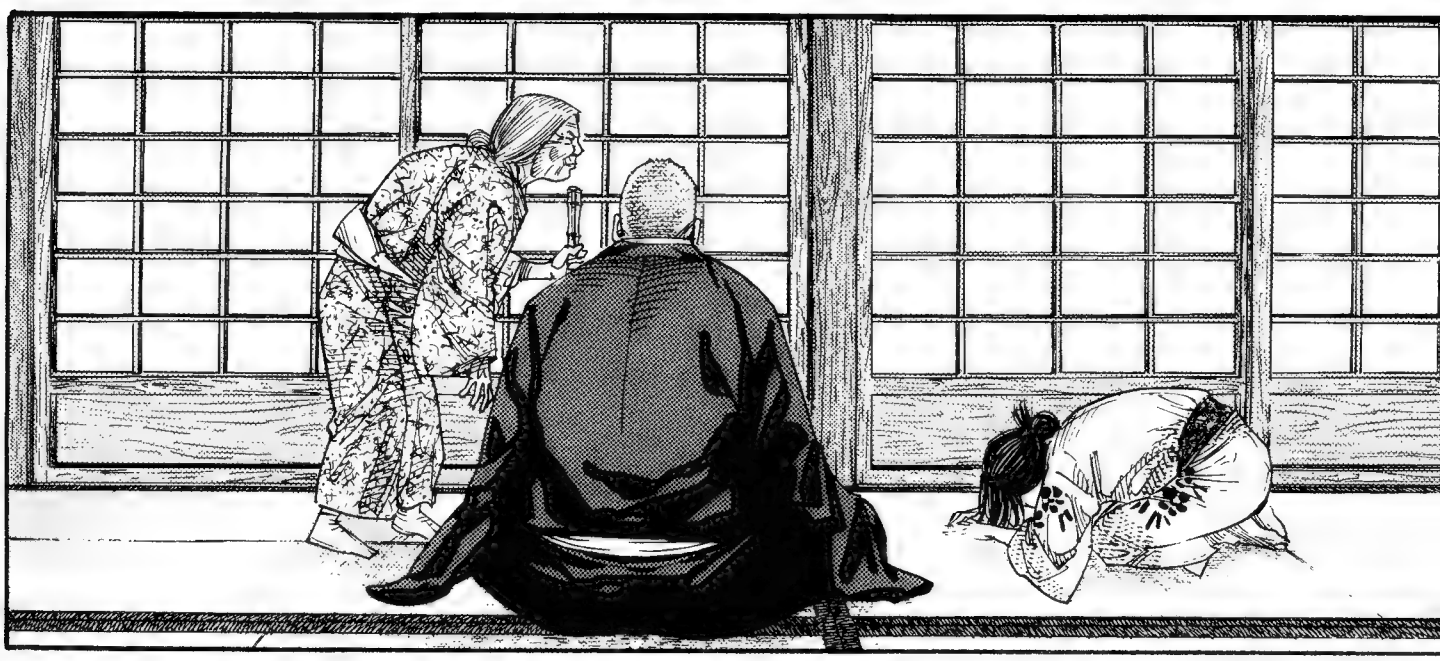

!!
I REFUSE YOUR OFFER.


YOU'VE MADE ME FEEL SO HAPPY.
I WILL NEVER EVER FORGET YOUR GENEROSITY...


...
WHAT ...?


BUT NOW I CAN'T.
I REALLY *DID* WANT TO BECOME PART OF THE HON'IDEN FAMILY.
I HATE MATAHACHI.
HE *BETRAYED* ME.


I CAN'T BECOME PART OF HIS FAMILY.
AND SO...









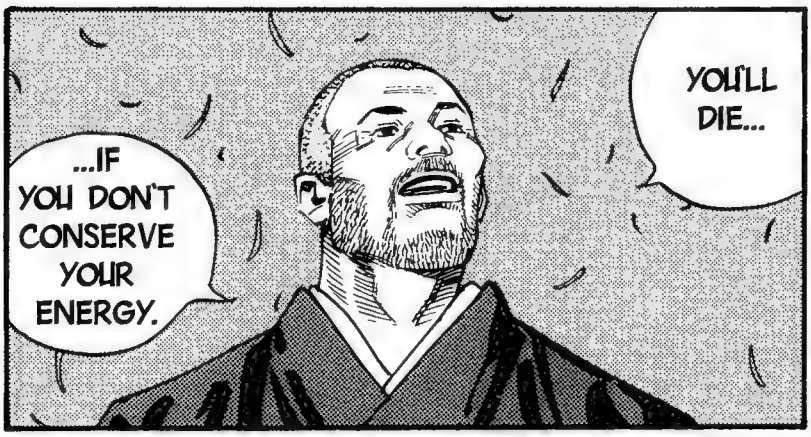

FWISH
THWAK THWAK
!!
GOOD FOR YOU, OTSŪ...
ENOUGH.
...
TELL ME, WHO'S THE TRAITOR!? YOU STRAY CAT!!
YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS, OTSŪ...!!
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF


FHOOP


...
...
HMM?
AH...
UR...
KILL ME!!
KILL ME, YOU BASTARD MONK!! KILL ME!!


AHUK!
HAK!


KOFF
KOFF
HAK
AMAZING! YOU STILL HAVE STRENGTH LEFT?

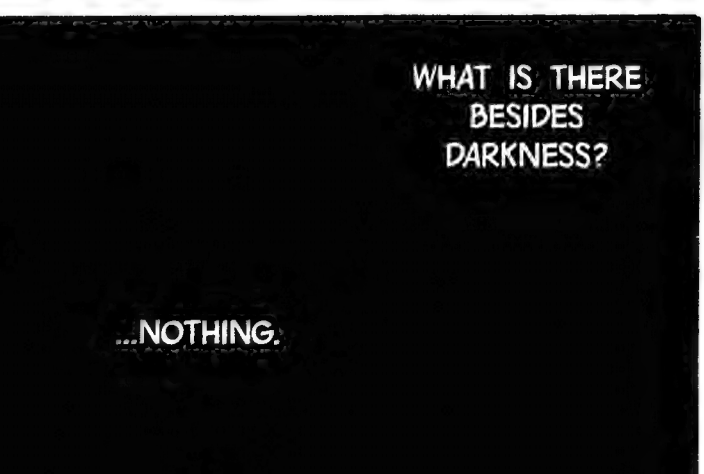

YOU'LL DIE...
...IF YOU DON'T CONSERVE YOUR ENERGY.


YOU MUST BE GETTING TIRED OF THE VIEW FROM UP THERE...


WHY WON'T YOU LET ME DIE A WARRIOR'S DEATH?
HUF
HUF
HAK
I'M NOT AFRAID OF DYING.


SO WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT YOURSELF?


YOU DAMN MONK.
ZHOOP


WHAT IS THERE BESIDES DARKNESS?
...NOTHING.

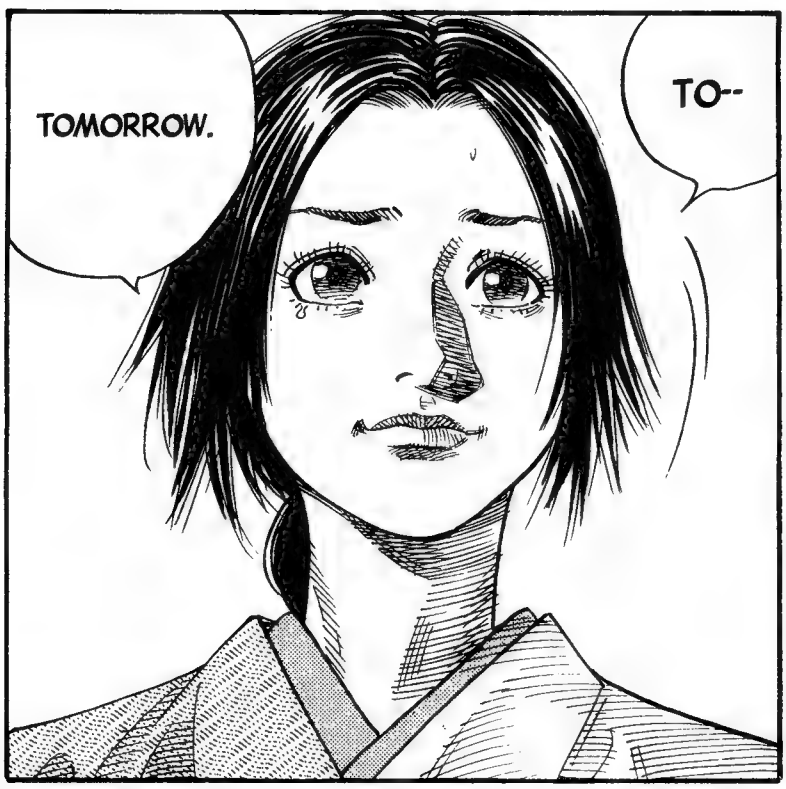

...


SHHH.
FSH


WE'LL GET IT RIGHT THIS TIME...


OPEN YOUR MOUTH WIDE...
OKAY ?
...SO YOU CAN GET THE RICE.
I HAVE TO GET THE RICE UP THERE...
...BUT YOU NEED TO MAKE AN EFFORT TO EAT IT, TOO.
COME ON! YOU HAVE TO EAT!
GOOD!
THAT'S IT.
WE GOT IT NOW.
...

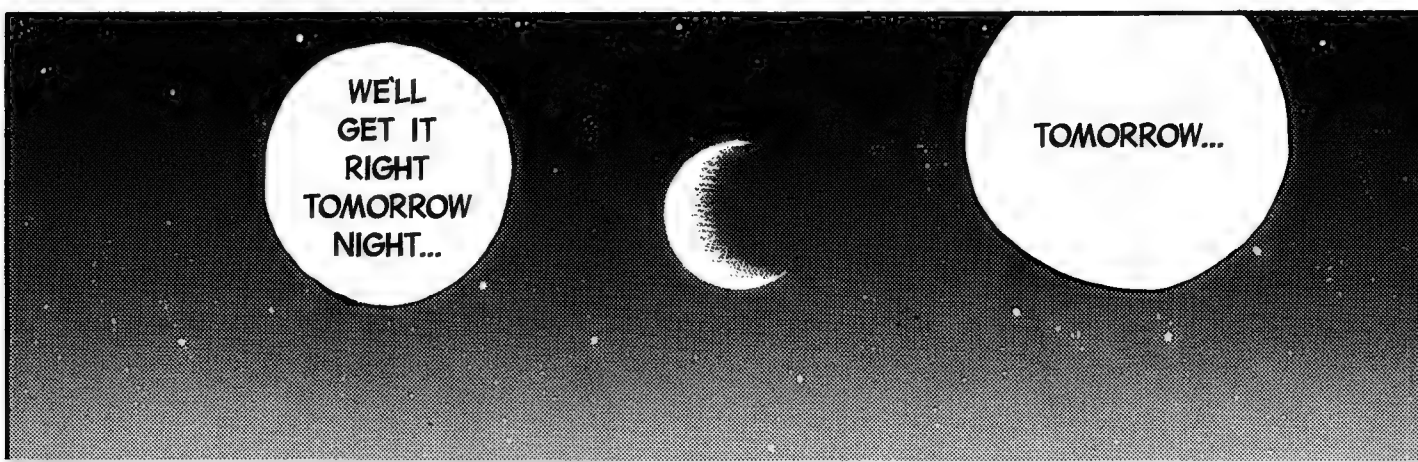

!!
FWICH


TOMORROW.
TO--

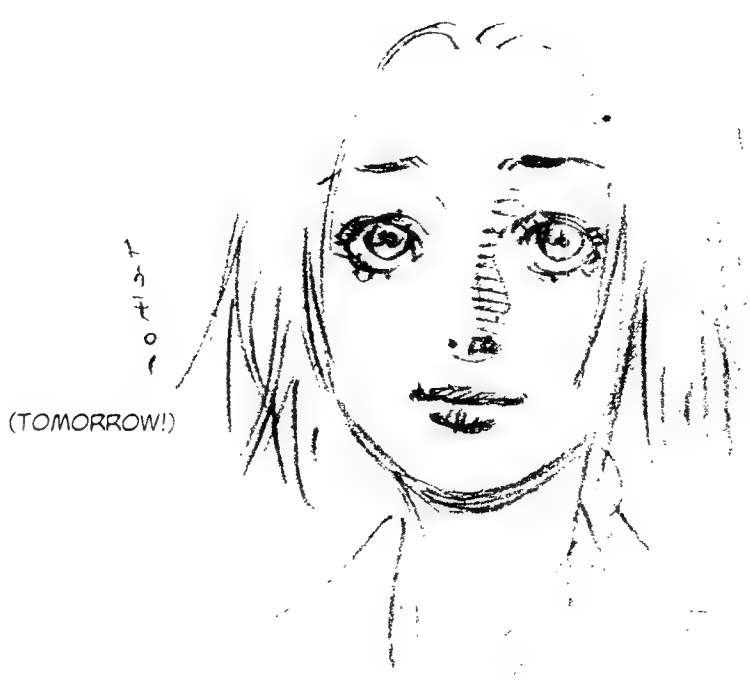

GASP!

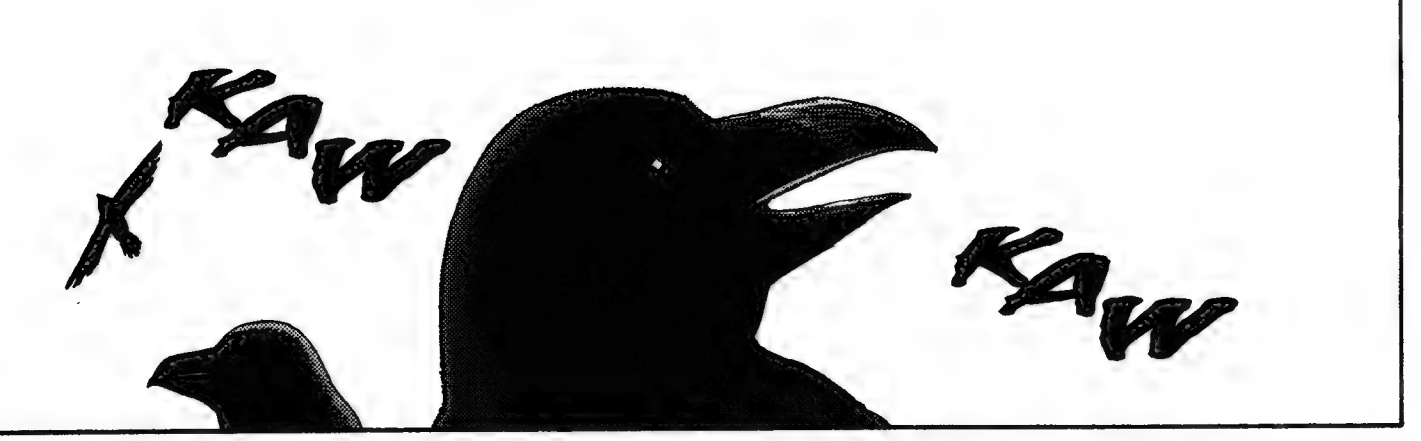


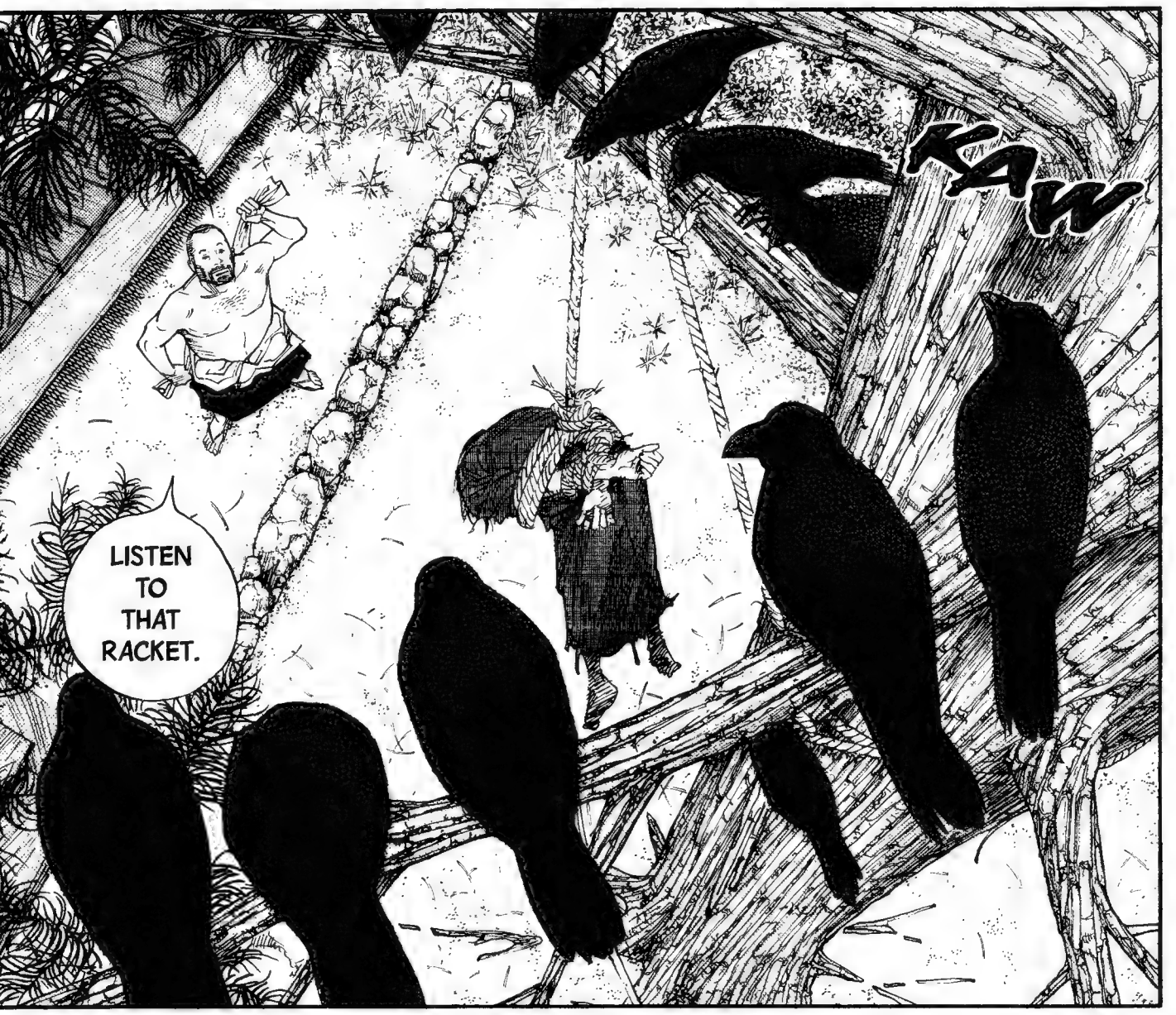

...


WE'LL GET IT RIGHT TOMORROW NIGHT...
TOMORROW...


Vagabond


(TOMORROW!)


KAW
KAW


KAW
LISTEN TO THAT RACKET.


HUF
HUF
KOFF

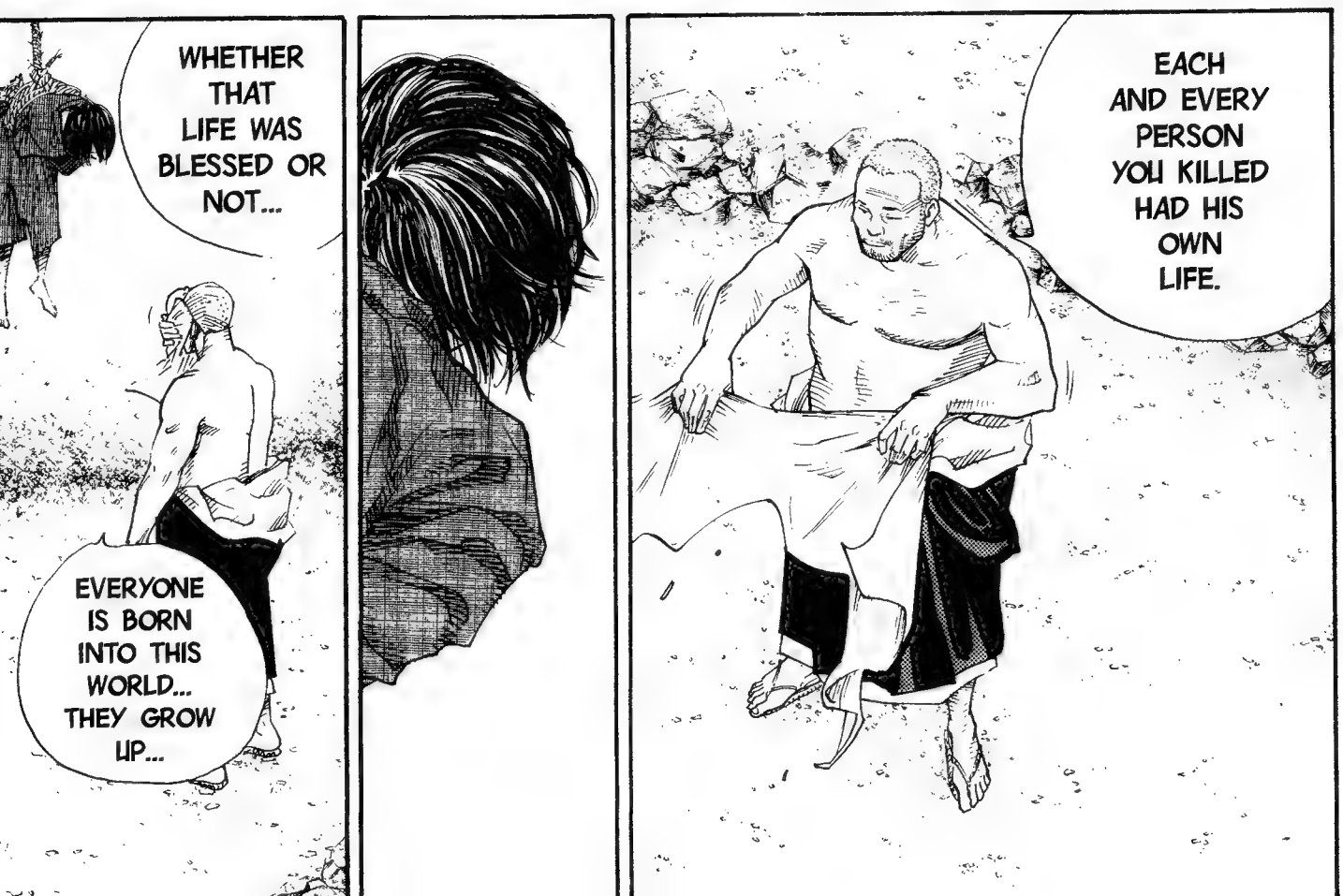

IT'S AS IF THEY'RE CRYING OUT, "DIE, DIE..."
RIGHT, TAKEZŌ?



#19 The Demon's Child


KAW
KAW
HMPH!
SO YOU WANT TO DIE HONORABLY?
A WARRIOR'S DEATH?
YOU'RE BEING SELFISH.




WHETHER THAT LIFE WAS BLESSED OR NOT...
EVERYONE IS BORN INTO THIS WORLD... THEY GROW UP...
EACH AND EVERY PERSON YOU KILLED HAD HIS OWN LIFE.

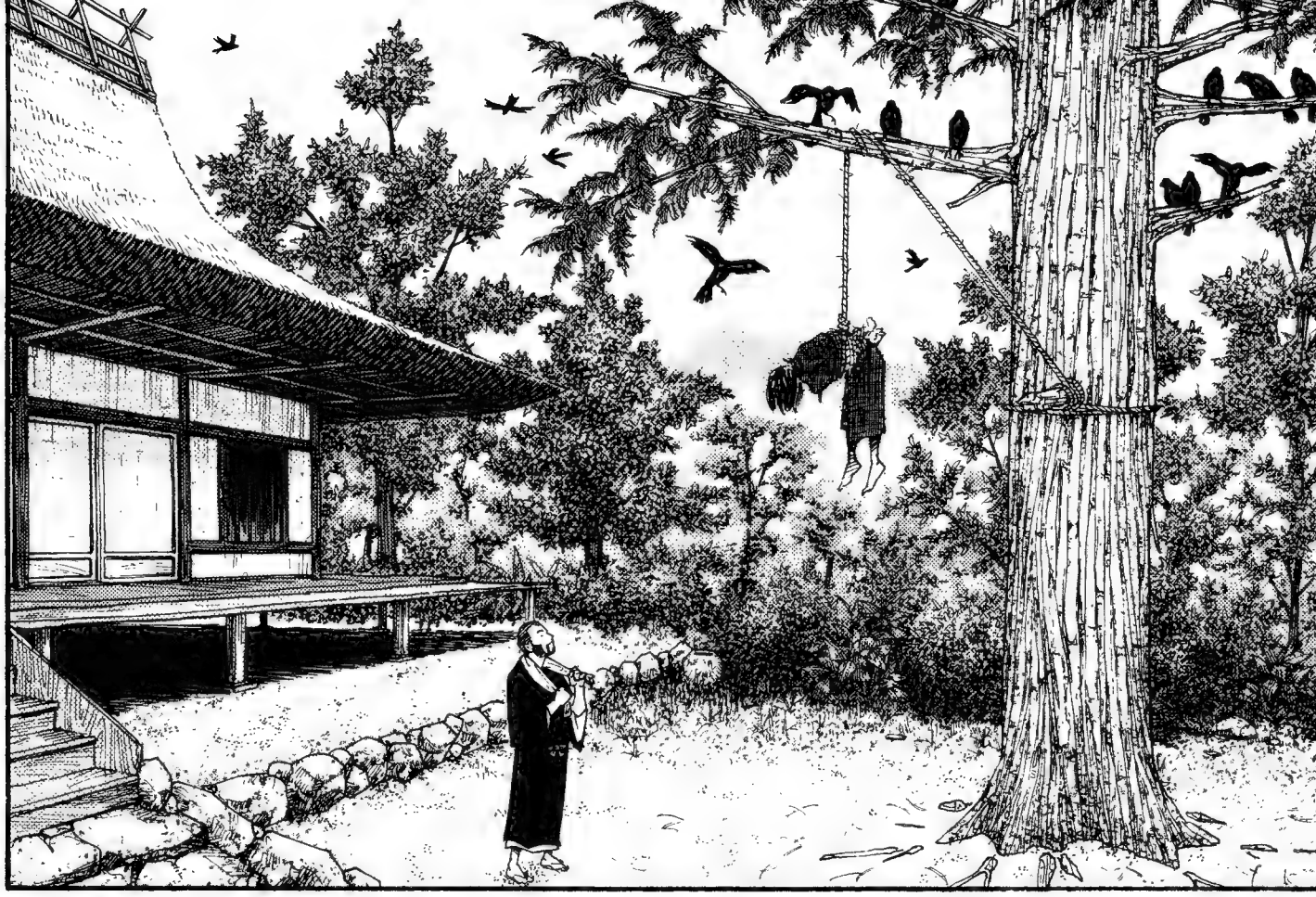

...SOME ARE ALONE IN THIS WORLD.
...SOME PEOPLE HAVE FAMILIES...
SOME HAVE PETS.
SOME ARE ENGAGED.
SOME HAVE YOUNG CHILDREN.
SOME PEOPLE HAVE HIGH HOPES AND GREAT DREAMS.


KAW
OTHERS HAVE NO AMBITION AT ALL.
IN-VINCIBLE UNDER THE SUN...
YOU ENDED EVERYTHING FOR THEM, TAKEZŌ.
YOU *KILLED* THEM.


WHAT GIVES YOU THE PRIVILEGE TO DIE WHEN AND HOW YOU CHOOSE?
AN HONORABLE DEATH...?


FWICH
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE...
...TAKEZŌ?
FWICH
UNGH

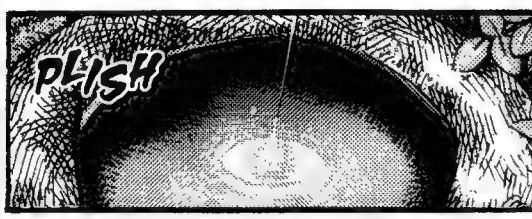

AHH!!
YOU TAKE AWAY THE LIVES OF OTHERS FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR OWN SURVIVAL...
ARGH!
NNGH!!
AND NOW YOU WANT TO DIE HONORABLY?
YOU'RE JUST BEING SELFISH!




HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF

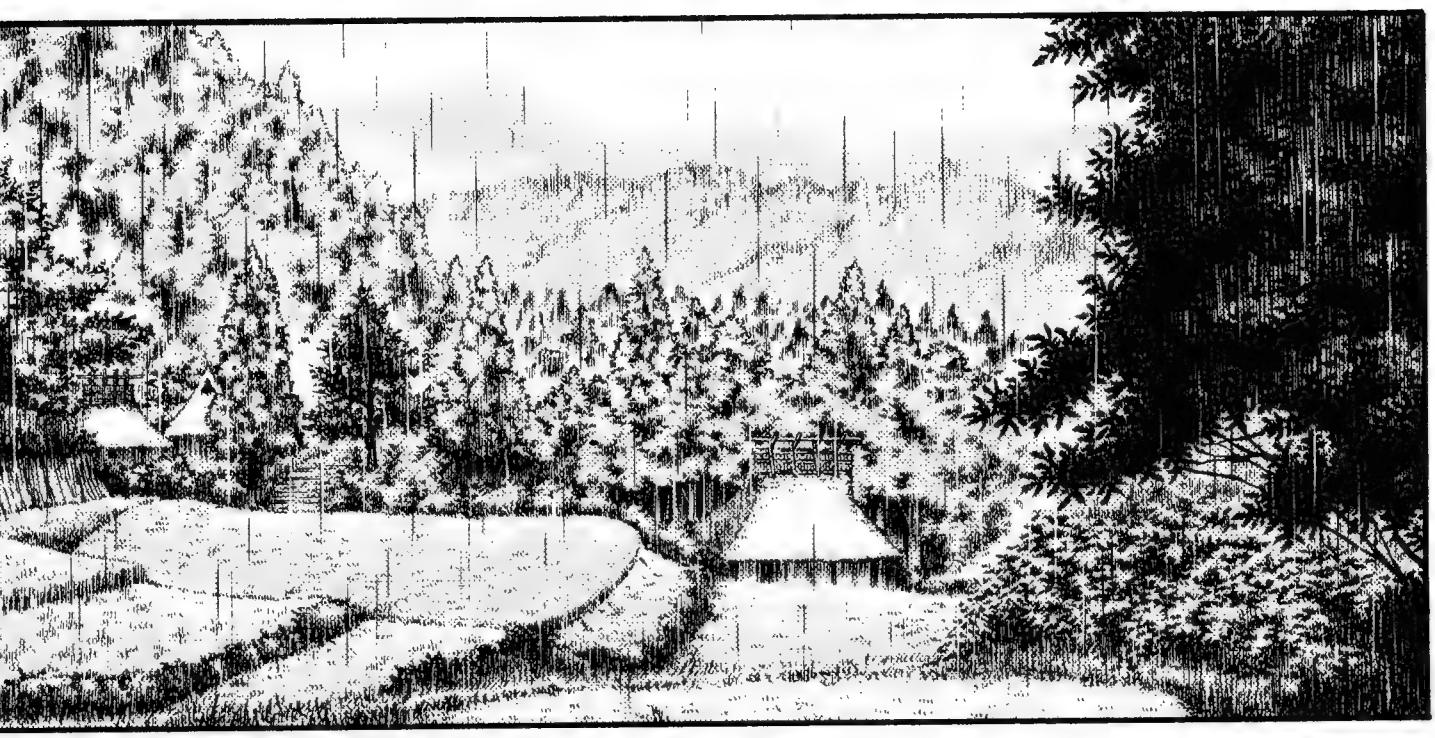

FSSHHHH
SWEET RAIN...
THE HEAVENS WON'T ALLOW YOU A PARCHED DEATH UNDER THE SUN.

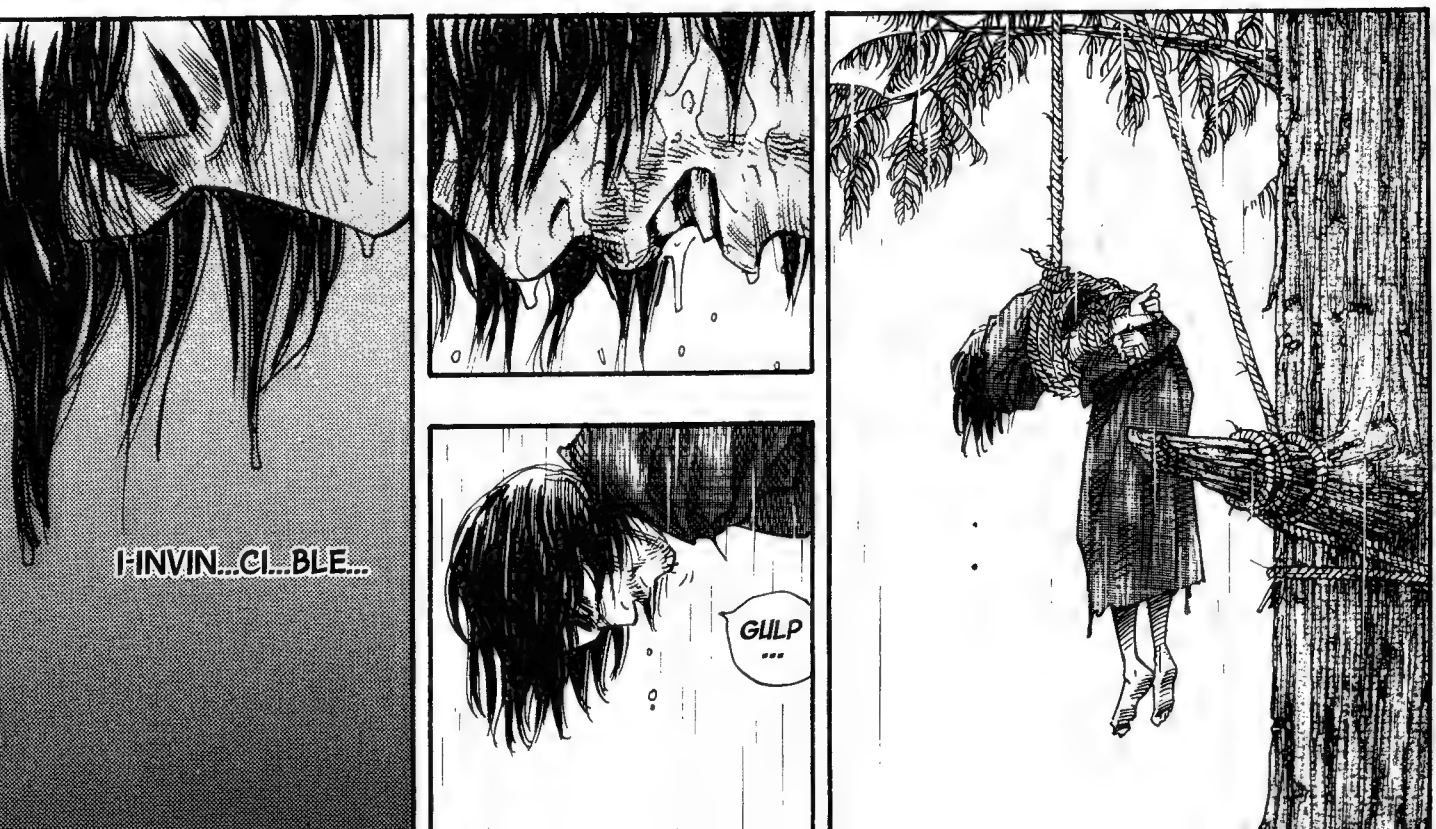

PLIP


PLISH


PLISH
PLISH


FSSHHH
THEY'RE NOT SO FORGIVING.




I-INVIN...CI...BLE...
GULP ...



TO BE THE
STRONGEST...

...THROUGHOUT
THE LANDS.

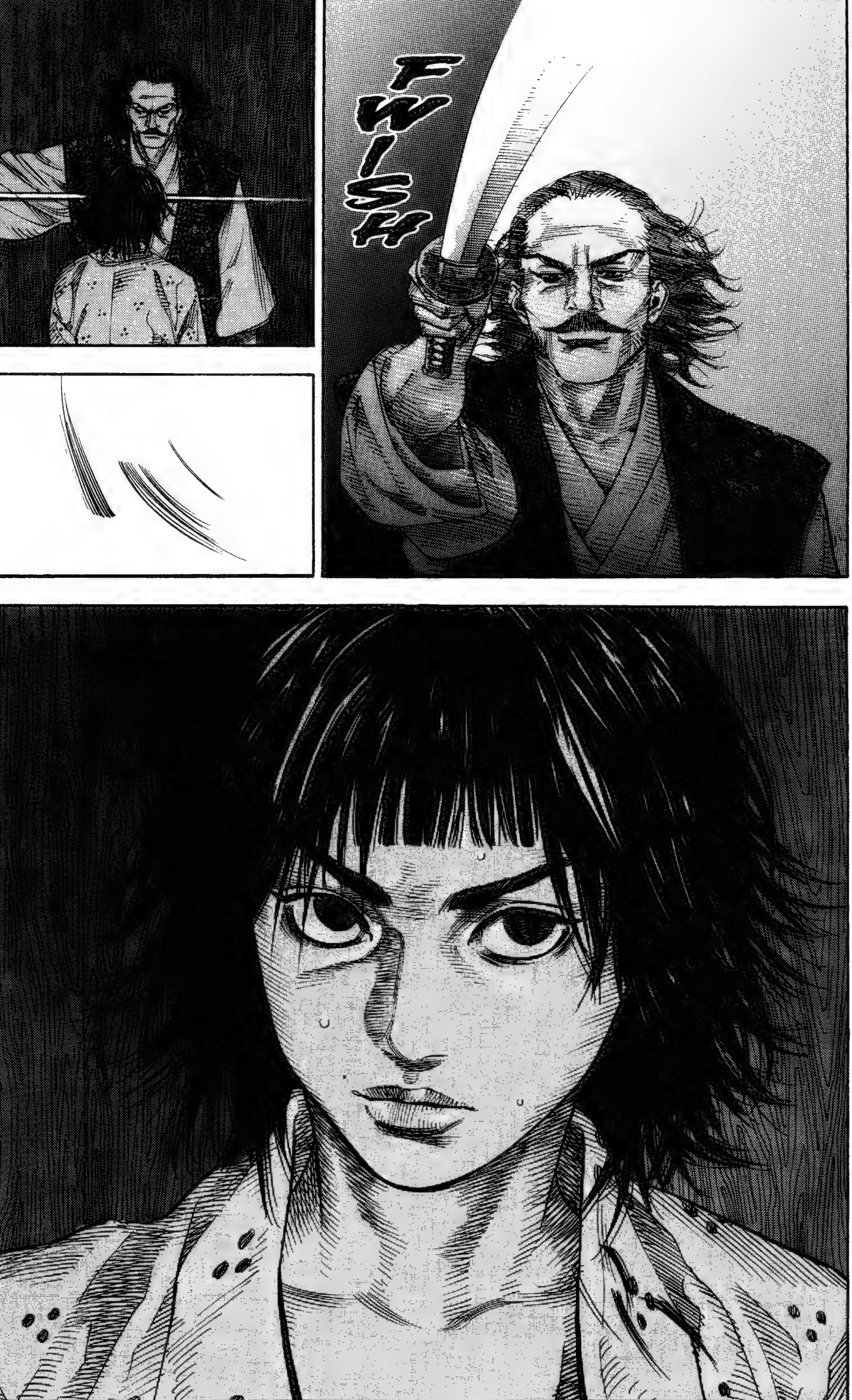


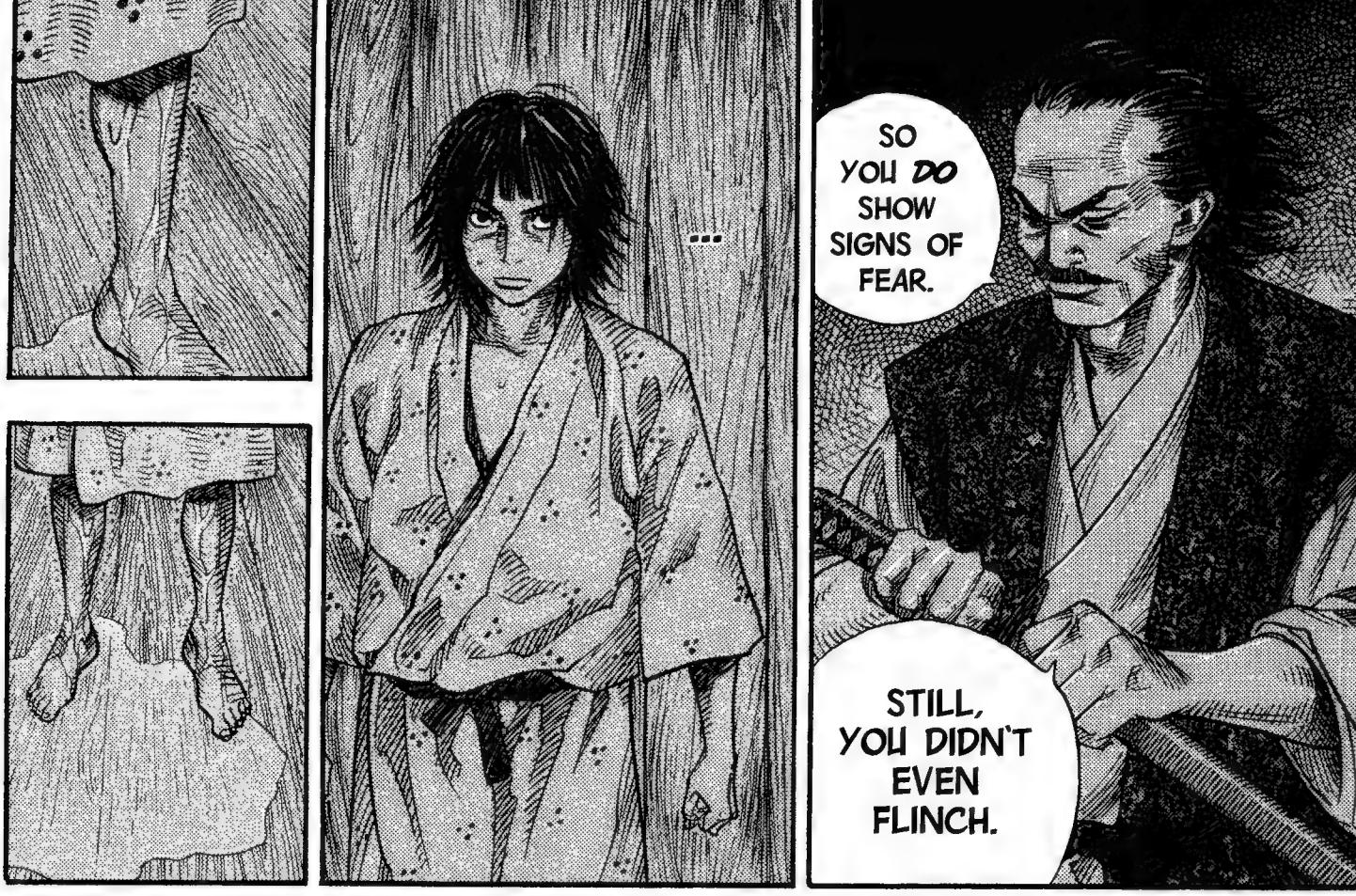

...
YOU TOO, HUH?
...
WELL, PICK UP THAT SWORD THEN.
YOU WON'T TAKE IT?


SO YOU THINK YOU CAN CUT ME DOWN?
ONLY ONE MAN CAN BE INVINCIBLE UNDER THE SUN.
!?
I DIDN'T SAY THAT.
DOESN'T MATTER.

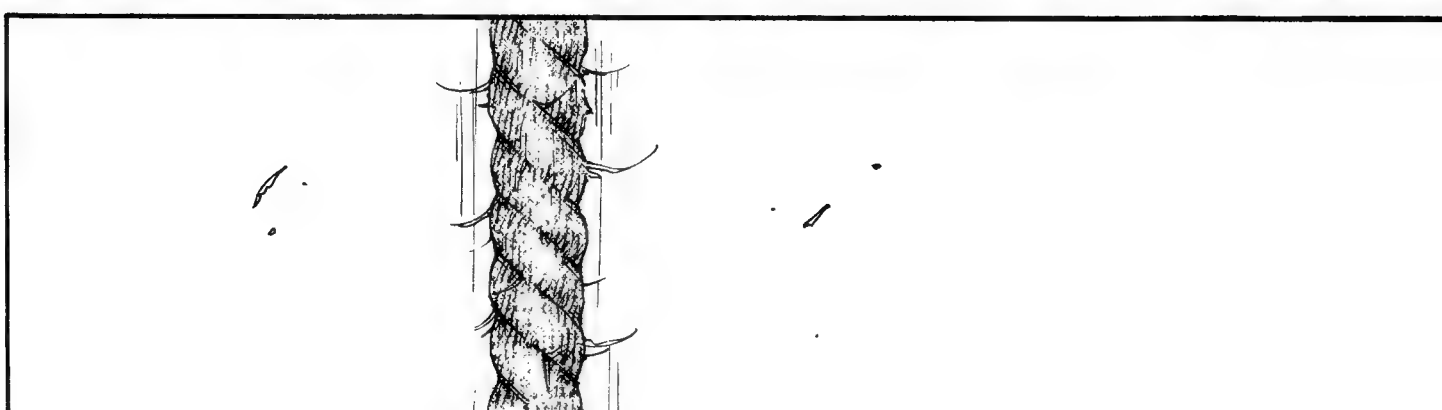

DRAW.
YOU CARRY THE BLOOD OF SHINMEN MUNISAI.
YOU WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BECOME STRONG.
...
AND EVENTUALLY BECOME A THREAT TO ME.


SHALL I JUST KILL YOU NOW...?


FWISH


...
SO YOU *DO* SHOW SIGNS OF FEAR.
STILL, YOU DIDN'T EVEN FLINCH.


NO WONDER YOU'RE CALLED "DEMON CHILD."








FIP


KAW
HUF
KAW
HUF
HUF
KOFF
HUF


FWOOSH




HOW CAN YOU STILL BE ALIVE...
...TAKEZŌ?


...HANGING FROM THIS TREE OF SHAME.


T-TSUJIKAZE...
KŌHEI...


Vagabond



(THICK AND STRONG FORM)


DRENCHED BY RAIN.
SCORCHED BY THE SUN.
PISS DRIED UP ON YOUR LEGS...
BUT YOU JUST GROW DIRTIER AND MORE MISERABLE BY THE DAY.
AND YOU'RE STILL ALIVE...
STUBBORNLY YOU HANG ON--AS IF YOU HAVE SOME HIGHER PURPOSE...



#20 Death

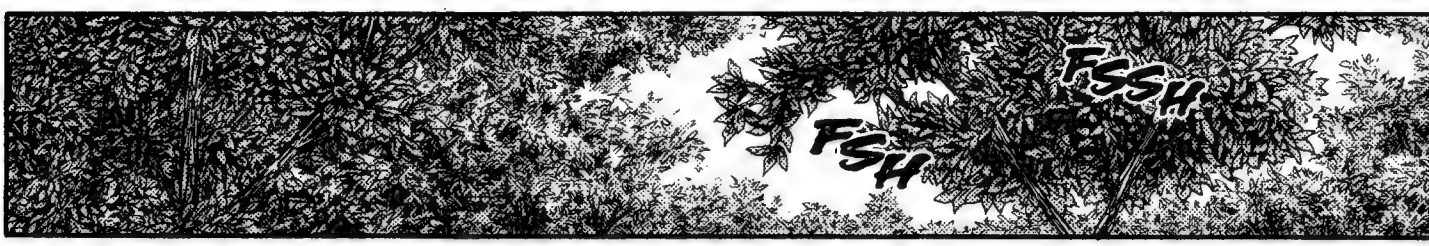
IF WE'RE BOTH ULTIMATELY HEADED FOR THE SAME DARK PLACE...
THUMP
...THEN I'LL SEND YOU OFF WITH A GLORIOUS CRIMSON DEATH...
I'M DESTINED TO GO TO HELL...
...THEN A MURDERER LIKE ME...
...IS CURSED.
SLISH



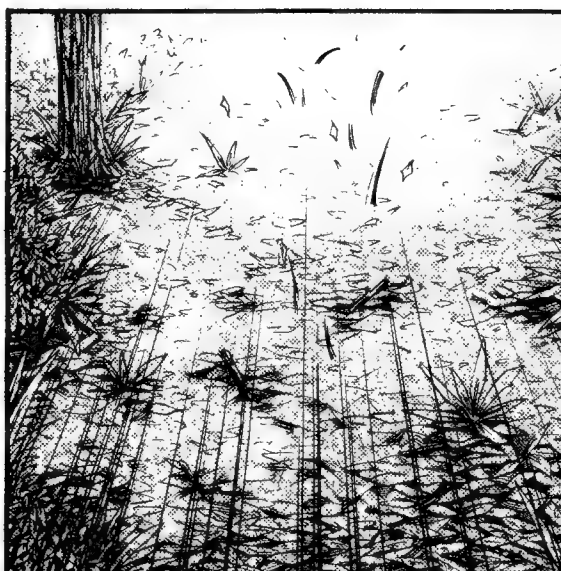

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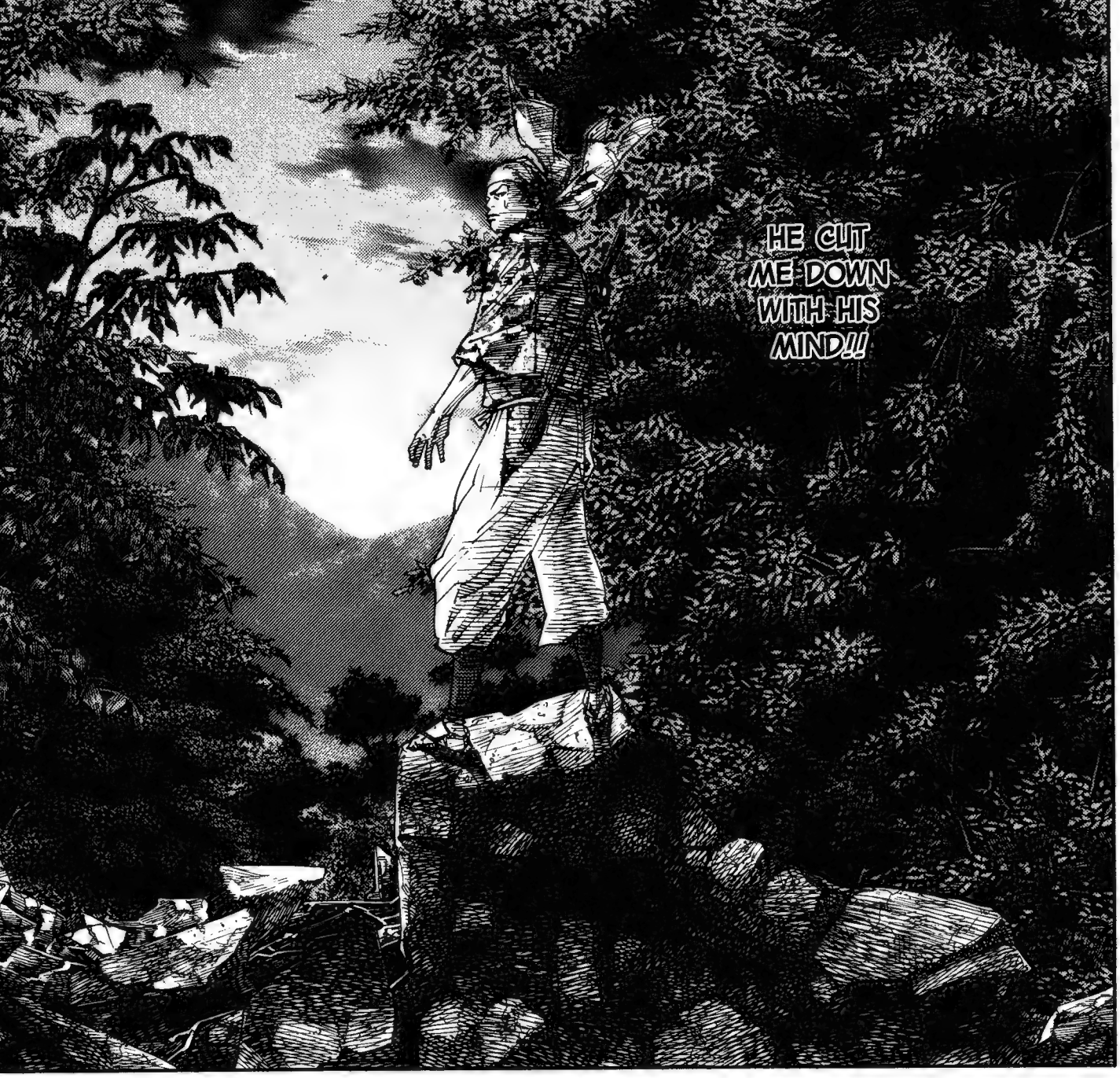


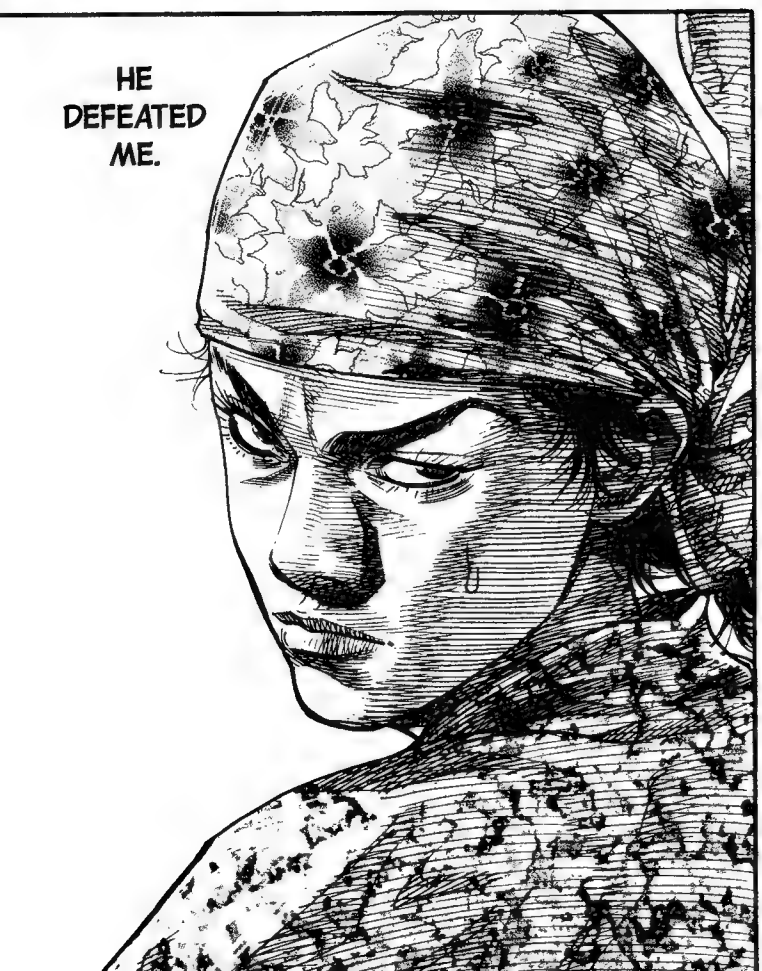


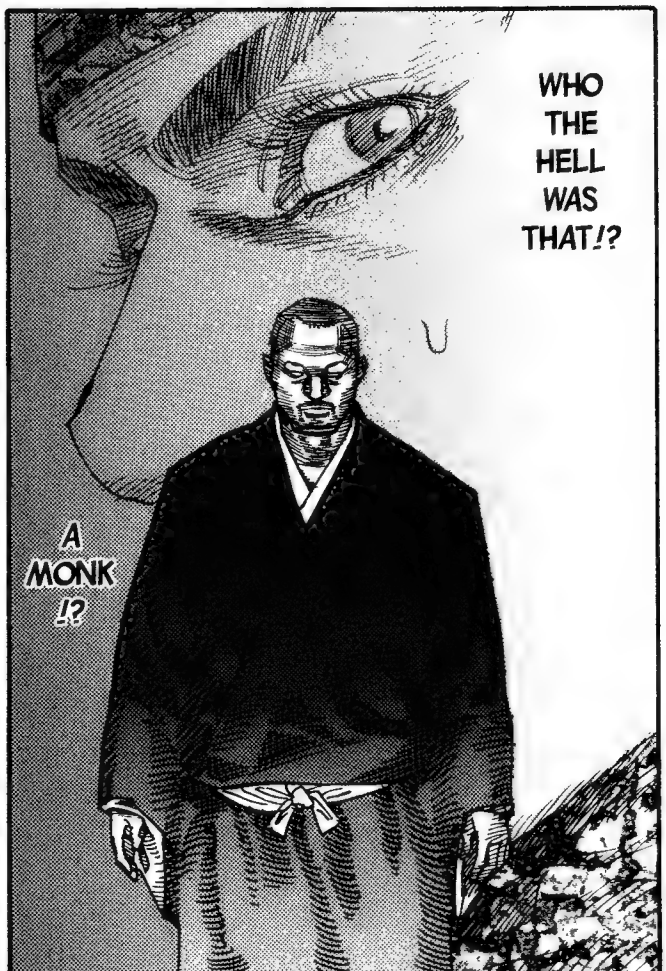

FSSH
FSH

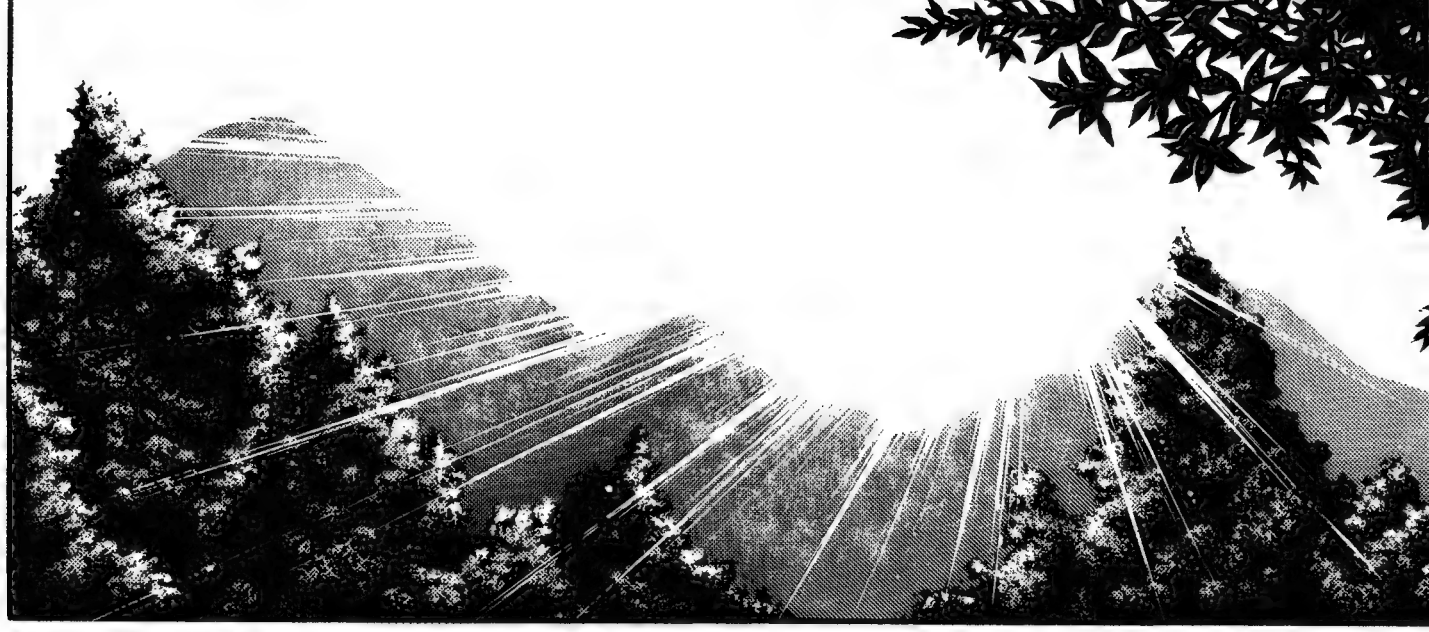

FWOOP

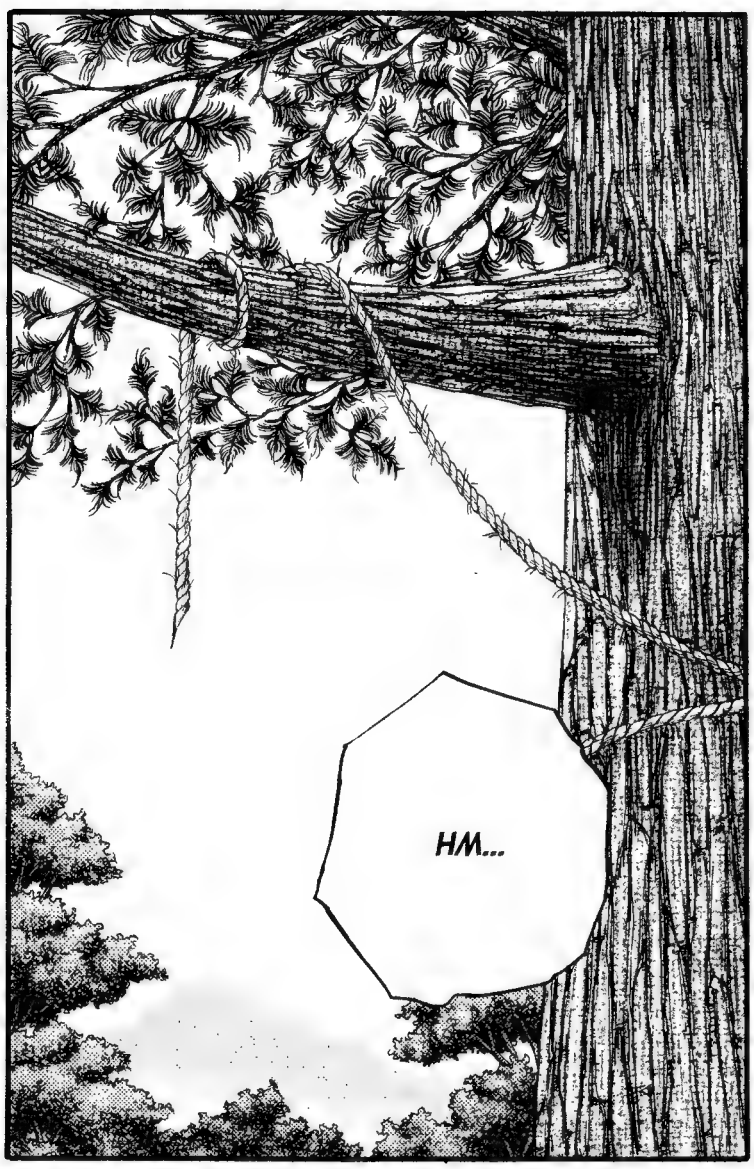


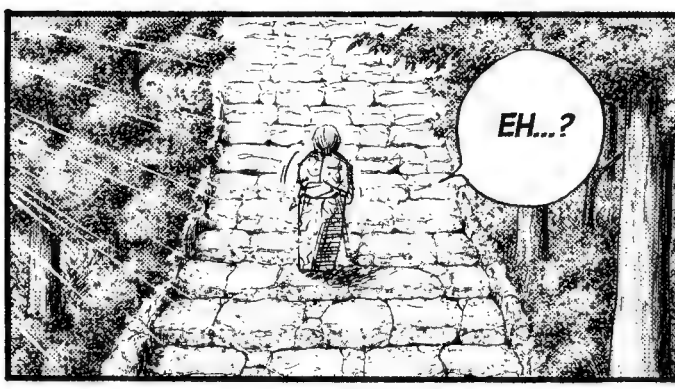

HE CUT ME DOWN WITH HIS MIND!!


HE DEFEATED ME.

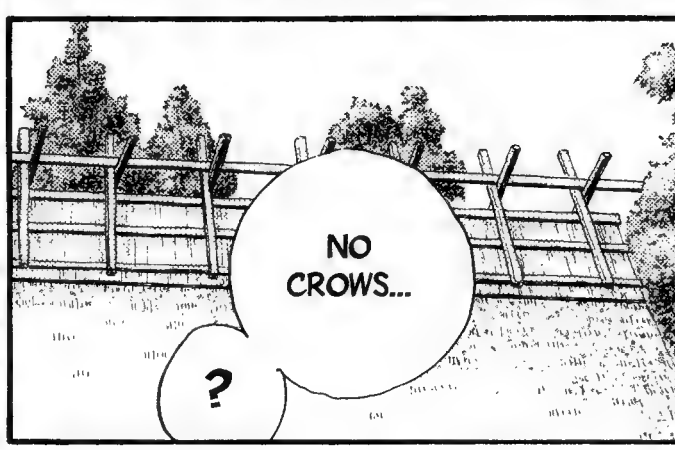

WHO THE HELL WAS THAT!?
A MONK!?




HM...

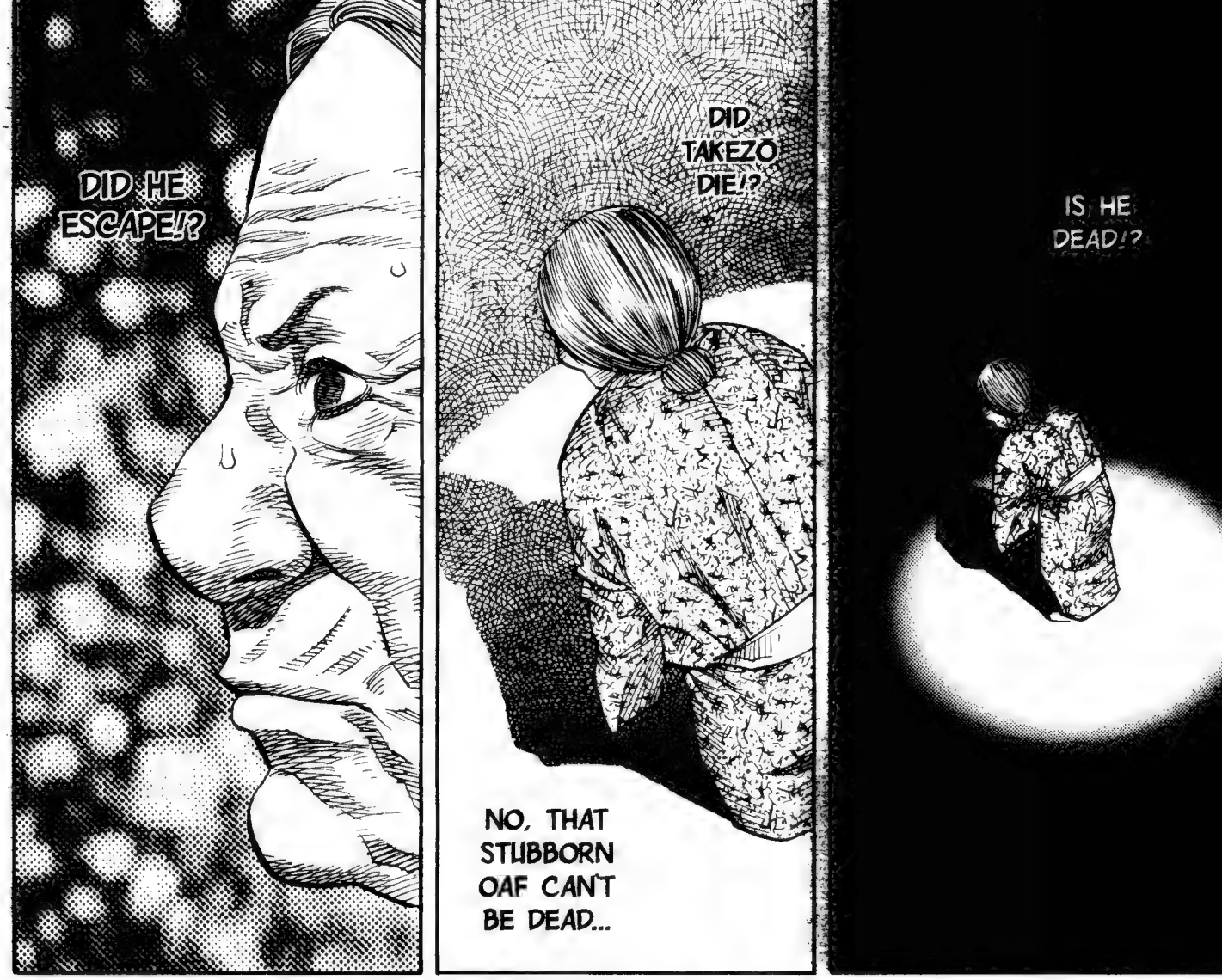

EH...?




NO CROWS...
?


!!

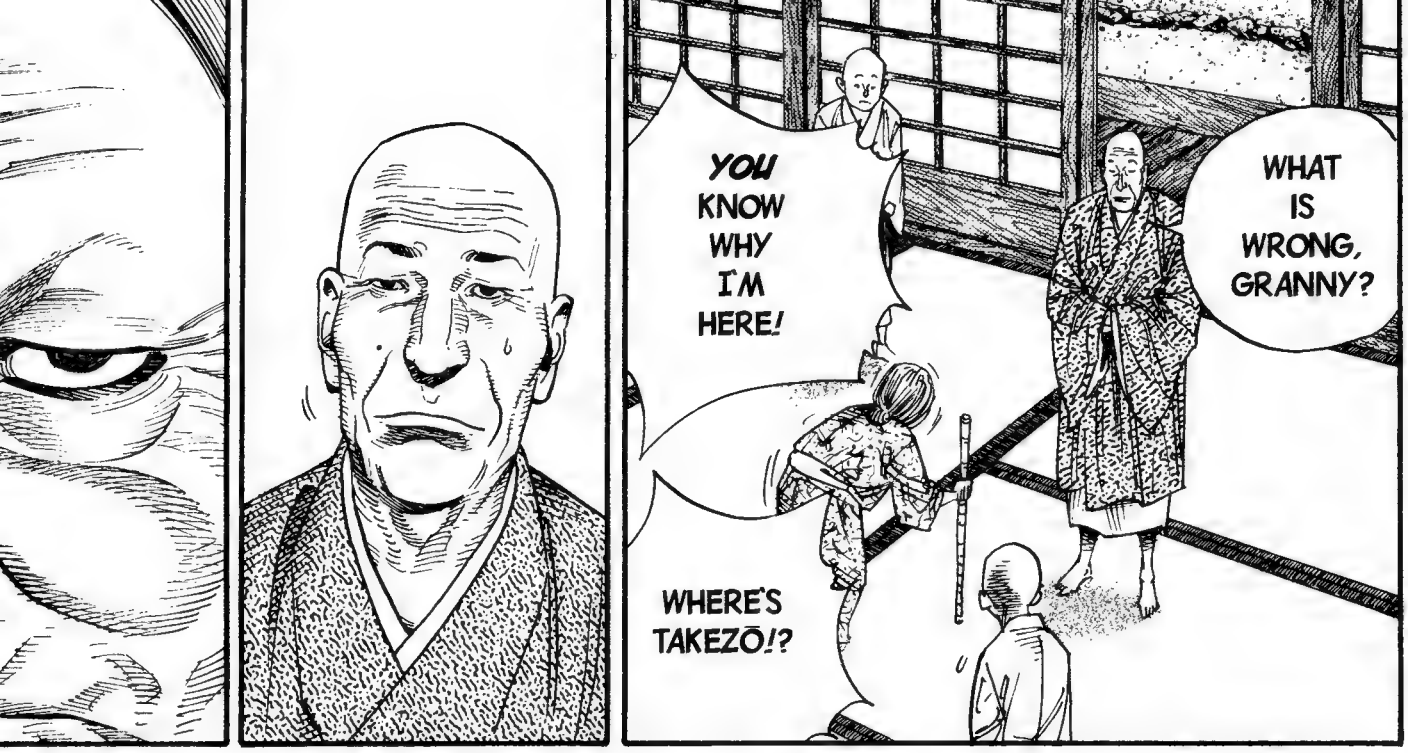

OTSŪ!!
AND OTSŪ!!
THUP
WHERE'S OTSŪ!?
UH, GRANNY...
THUP
TAKUAN!!
GRANNY.
WHERE IS TAKUAN!?
ZHOOP
ZHOOP
ZHOOP
HUF
HUF
HUF
GRANNY!
...

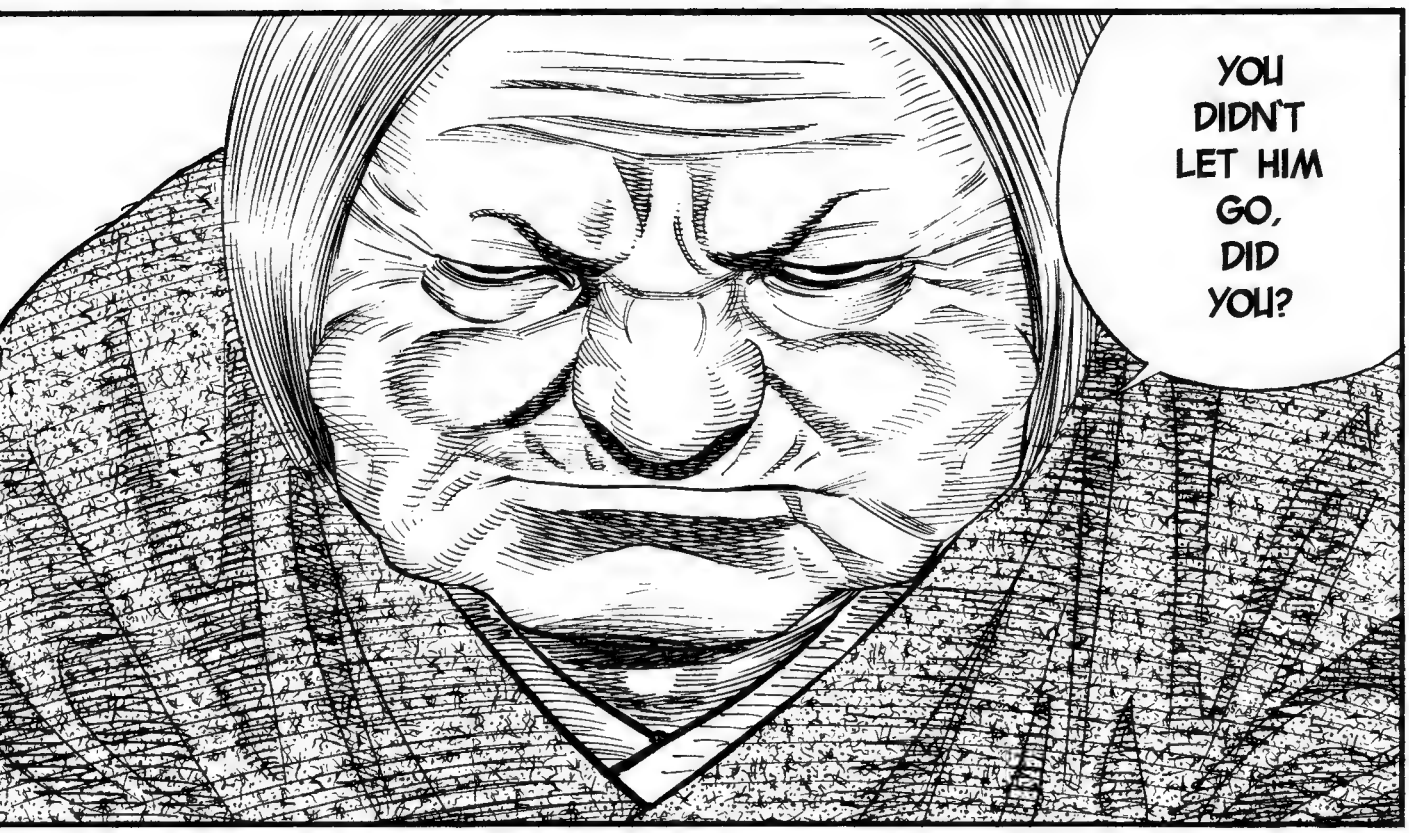

DID HE ESCAPE!?
DID TAKEZŌ DIE!?
NO, THAT STUBBORN OAF CAN'T BE DEAD...
IS HE DEAD!?


GASP!



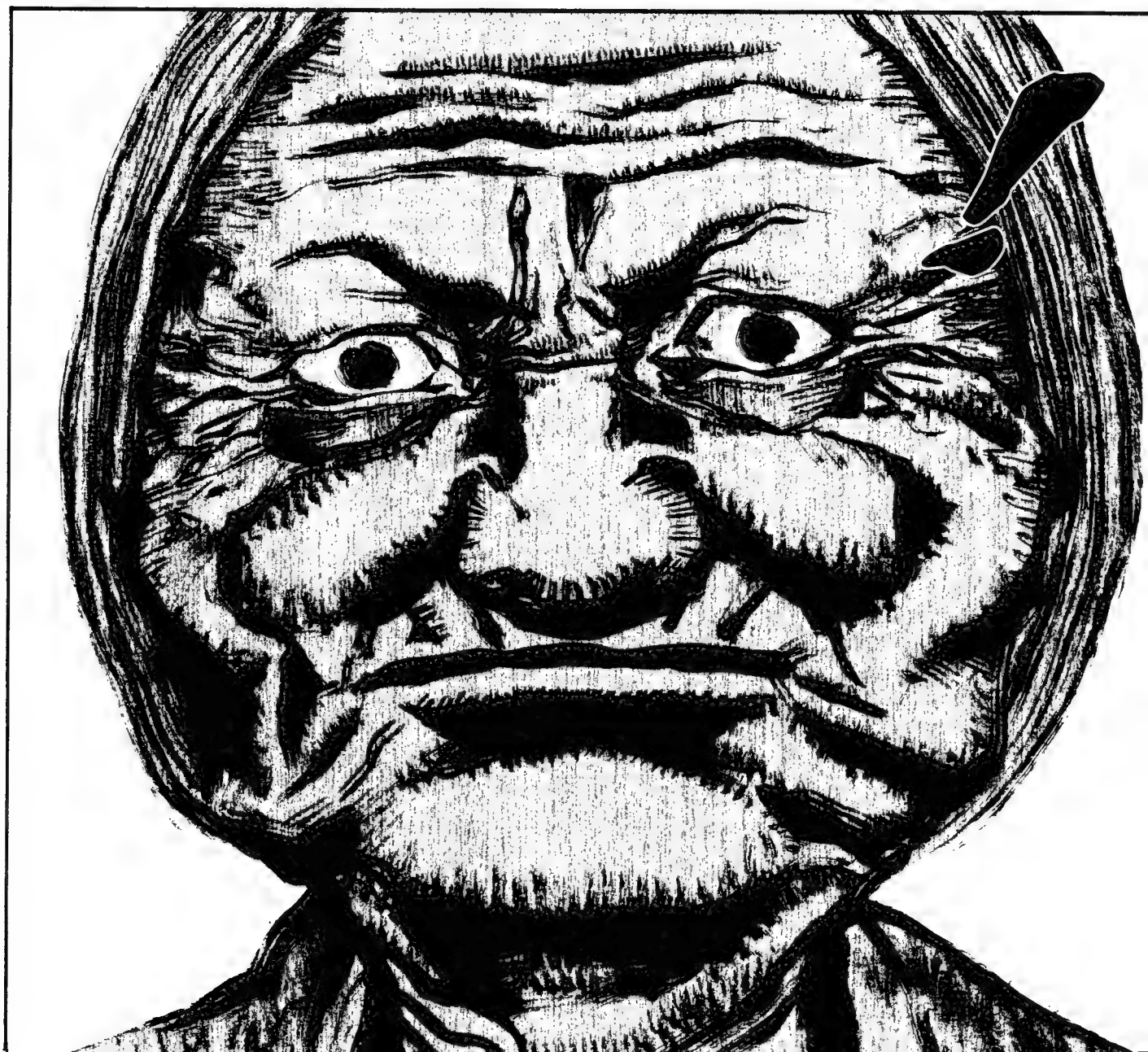



WHAT IS WRONG, GRANNY?
YOU KNOW WHY I'M HERE!
WHERE'S TAKEZŌ!?


YOU DIDN'T LET HIM GO, DID YOU?


TELL ME!


TAKEZŌ
IS
DEAD.




THE ROPE BROKE?
HE HAD GROWN QUITE WEAK FROM HANGING UP THERE FOR SO LONG...
...SO HE MIGHT HAVE ALREADY BEEN DEAD.
HE DIED IMMEDI-ATELY.
HMPH!
THE ROPE BROKE. HE FELL AND SMASHED HIS HEAD ON THE GROUND...
EH?
WHERE'S HIS BODY?
AFTER ALL, TAKEZŌ WAS A KNOWN FUGITIVE.
HIS BODY WAS TAKEN TO IKEDA TERUMASA AT HIMEJI CASTLE...
AT HIMEJI CASTLE!


...
ALL ACCORDING TO TAKUAN'S SCRIPT, EH?
HM!?
NO!!!
YOU THINK ME BLIND!?
THE ROPE BROKE, HUH?


THE FACT THAT YOU WON'T SHOW ME TAKEZŌ'S BODY...
...MEANS HE'S STILL ALIVE.
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO...
THEY LET HIM GO.
THOSE TWO...
TAKUAN...
...AND OTSŪ!!




HUF
KRCH

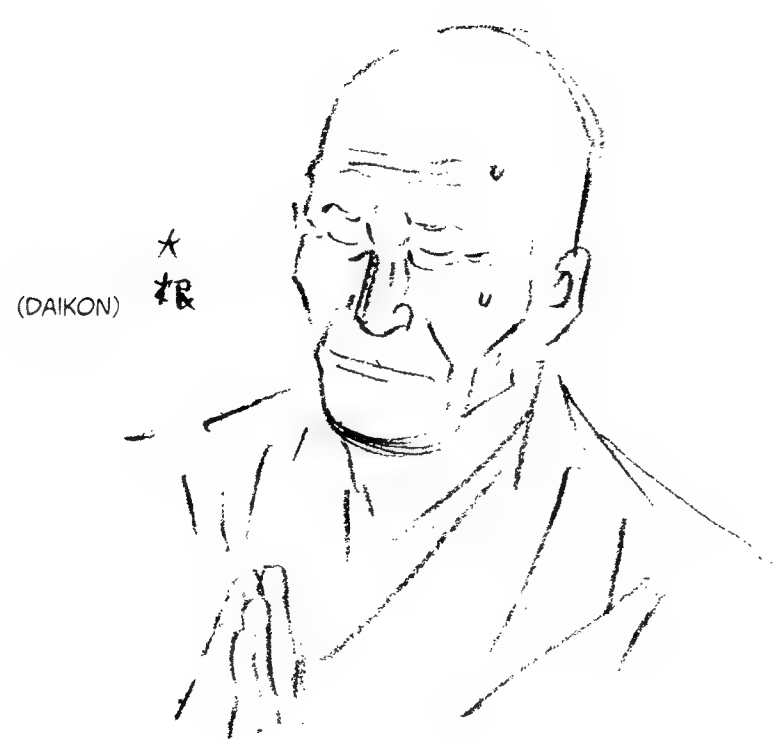

KRCH
HUF
HUF
TAKEZŌ
...


YOU'RE SO HEAVY.


I'LL LET YOU CHOOSE WHERE YOU'D LIKE TO DIE.
SNIF




Vagabond


(DAIKON)


TAKEZŌ...
SO THIS IS WHERE YOUR LIFE WILL END.
...


YOU'VE CHOSEN WELL.
THERE'S A GOOD VIEW OF MIYAMOTO VILLAGE FROM HERE.





#21 A Place in the Sun


K-
KILL
ME...


OH...
YOUR VOICE IS BACK. BUT I CAN HARDLY HEAR YOU.


NOW, WHAT DID YOU SAY?


THE WATER FROM MIYAMOTO VILLAGE IS GOOD.
IT WILL REFRESH YOUR WITHERED BODY.


YOU DAMN MONK.
HUF
HUF
KILL ME.
HUF
HUF


A DARK SHADOW RUNS ACROSS YOUR FACE.
TAKEZŌ...




WHAT ELSE WOULD I WANT?
IS THAT YOUR DESIRE?


HMPH! I DON'T HAVE TO LISTEN TO YOU...
YOUR EYES ARE SO...
...DARK...
YOU'VE CUT DOWN SO MANY...
...LONELY...
IN THE END, YOU'LL BE CUT DOWN, YOURSELF.
THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT?
...AND IN PAIN.
...
YOU SHOULD REJOICE...
YOU'RE GOING TO DIE NOW.
THEN YOU HAVE LIVED YOUR LIFE TO THE FULLEST.
THAT'S RIGHT.
TAKEZŌ ...
WHY AREN'T YOU SMILING?

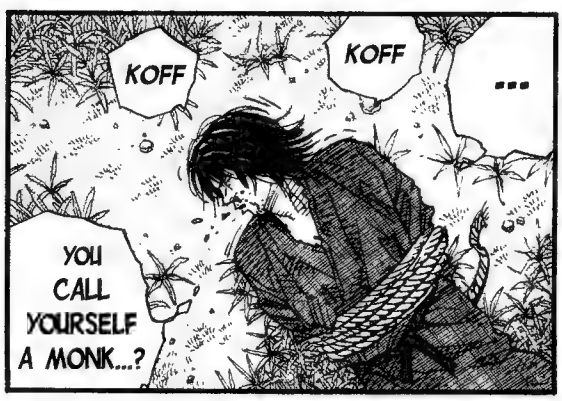

I CUT DOWN EVERYONE AROUND ME!!
AND NOW I'LL BE KILLED BY THIS DAMN MONK SPOUTING GIBBERISH!!
!
FWAK
...!!
FWAK
ANNOUNCE YOURSELF TO THE WORLD...
FWAK
BE FULL OF PRIDE!


THIS IS MY LIFE!!
I LIVED MY LIFE THE WAY I WANTED TO.
MY WONDERFUL LIFE!!
IT'S BEEN SO FULFILLING!! HA HA HA!


JUST KILL ME!!
KILL ME!!
SAY IT!!
THWAK
NNGH.
SAY IT!!
YOU'RE DEAD!!
NNGH.
YOU'RE DEAD!!
THOK
HUF
HUF
...

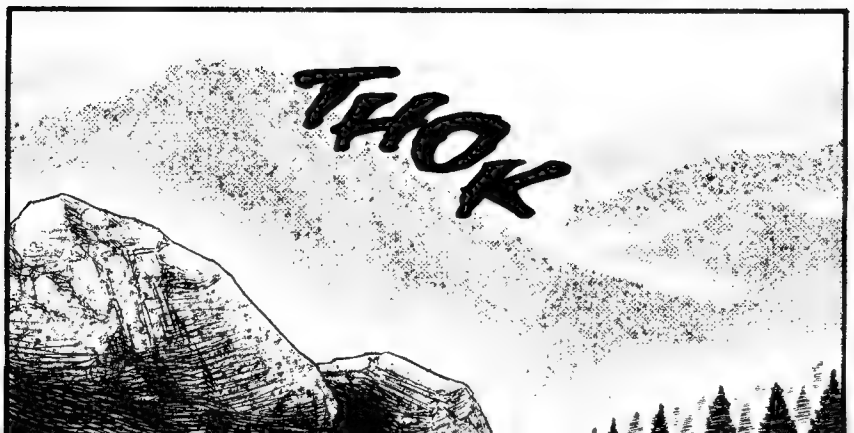

THOK
YOU'RE DEAD!!


...


KOFF
KOFF
...
YOU CALL YOURSELF A MONK...?


IF YOU'RE SATISFIED WITH YOUR LIFE...
THOK
NNGH.
ANNOUNCE IT TO THE WORLD!!
YOU FOOL!!


I'M A DAMN FOOL OF A MONK.
NO...

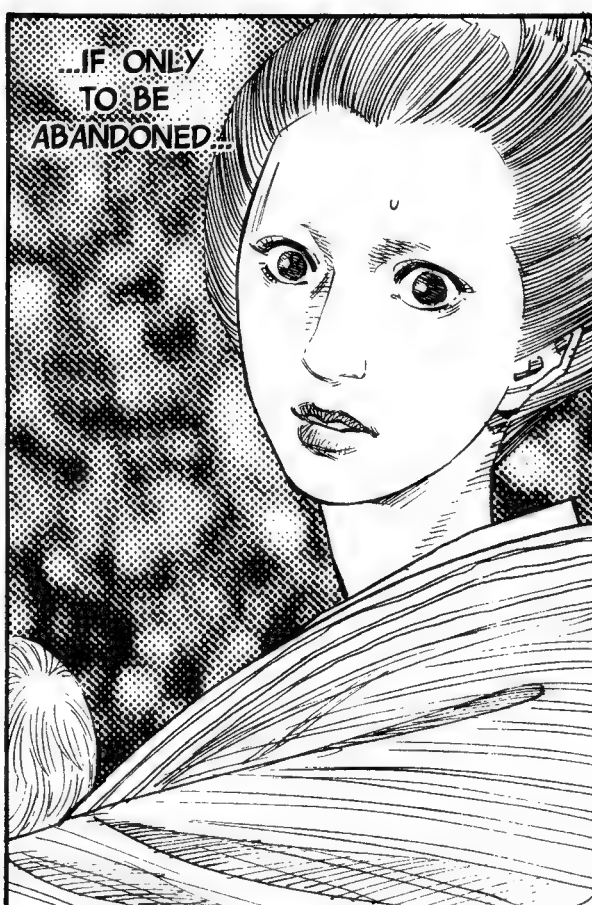

THOK


FWOOP
HUF
HUF
HUF
KRICH
HUF
HUF
THOK
!!
WHY...?
THOK


WHY WAS I BORN...?



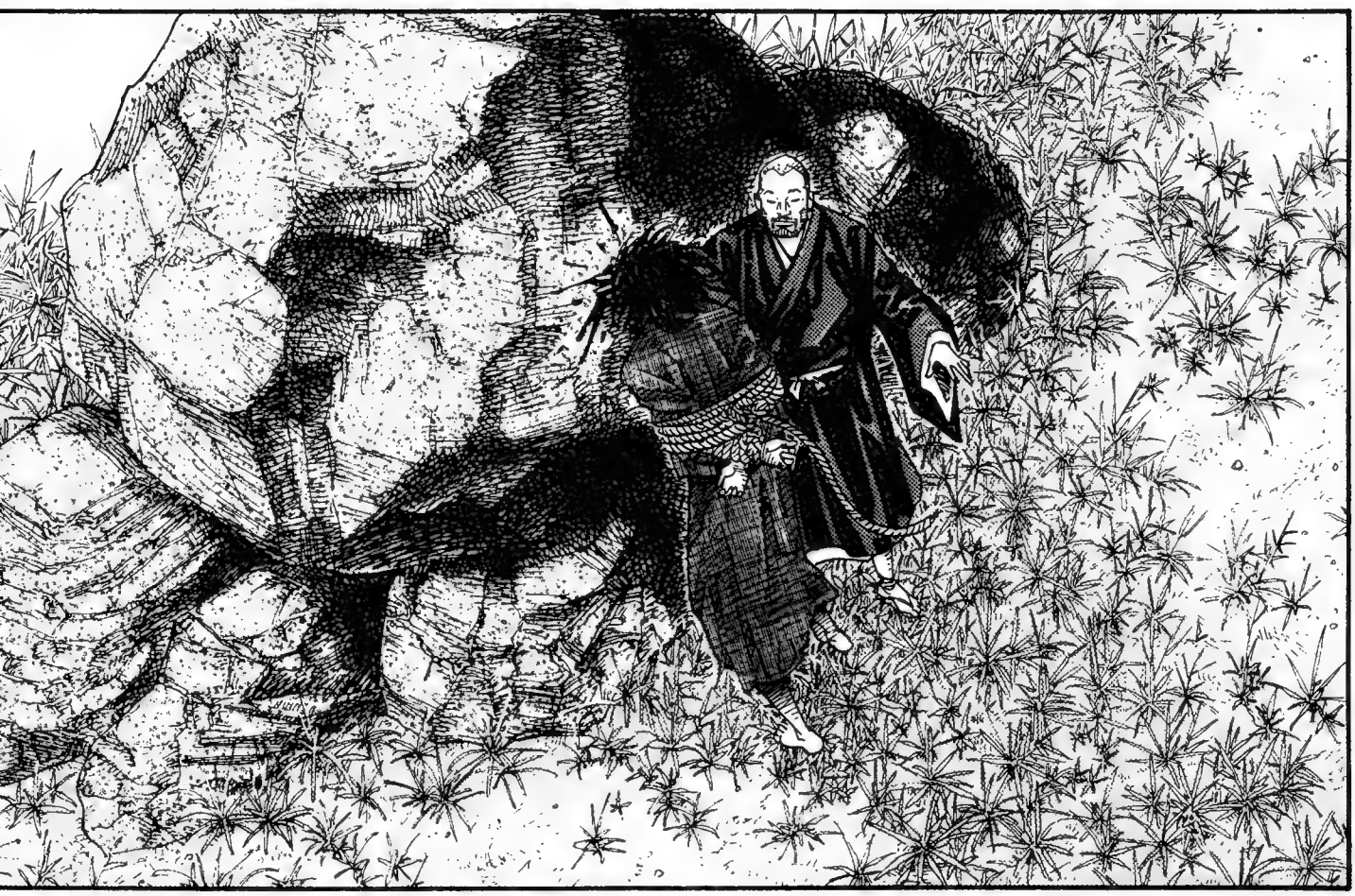

...AND SHUNNED?


...IF ONLY TO BE ABANDONED...


TO BE FEARED, HATED AND DESPISED BY ALL!
I'M THE SON OF A DEMON AND I DESERVE TO DIE...
KILL ME!
LET ME DIE!


WHY WAS
I EVEN
BORN?



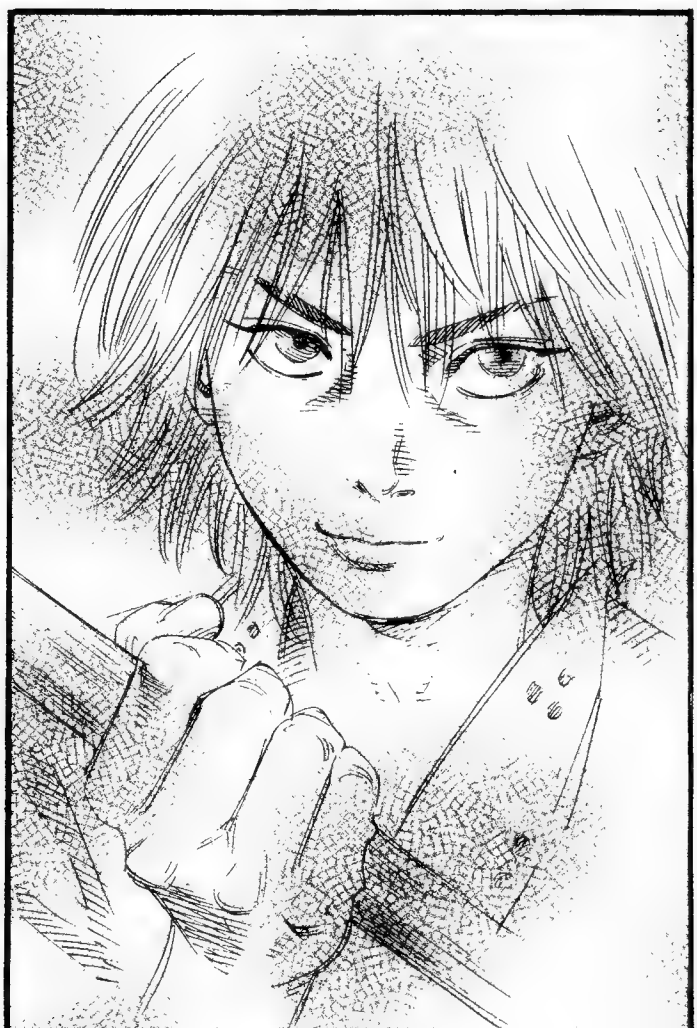



TAKEZŌ...
TUGG
WILL YOU THROW YOUR LIFE AWAY...?




EVEN THE PERSON *YOU USED* TO BE?
WILL YOU THROW *EVERYTHING* AWAY?











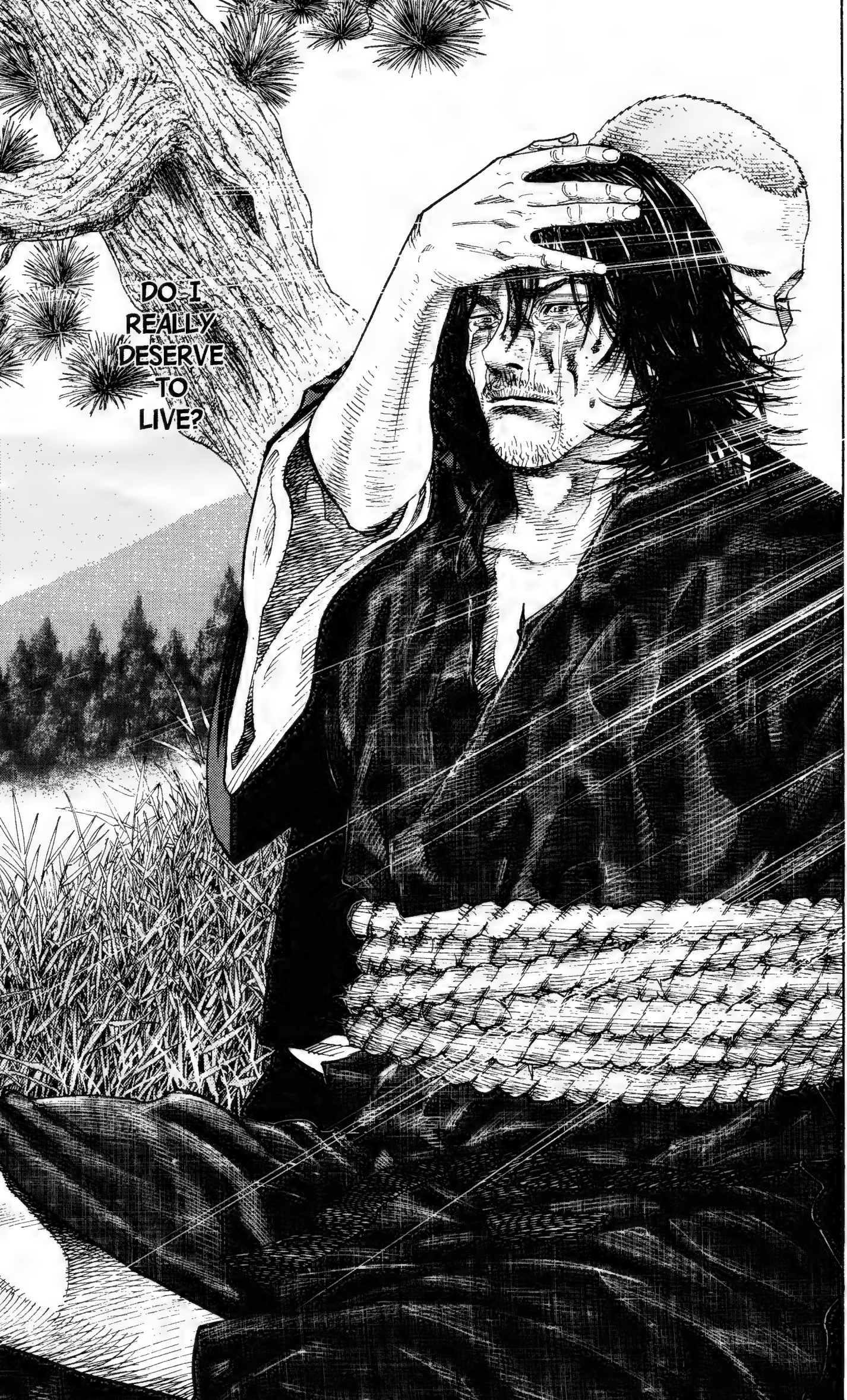

IS IT WORTH IT?
IS A LIFE OF RAGE AND MURDER TRULY HONORABLE?
TAKEZŌ?

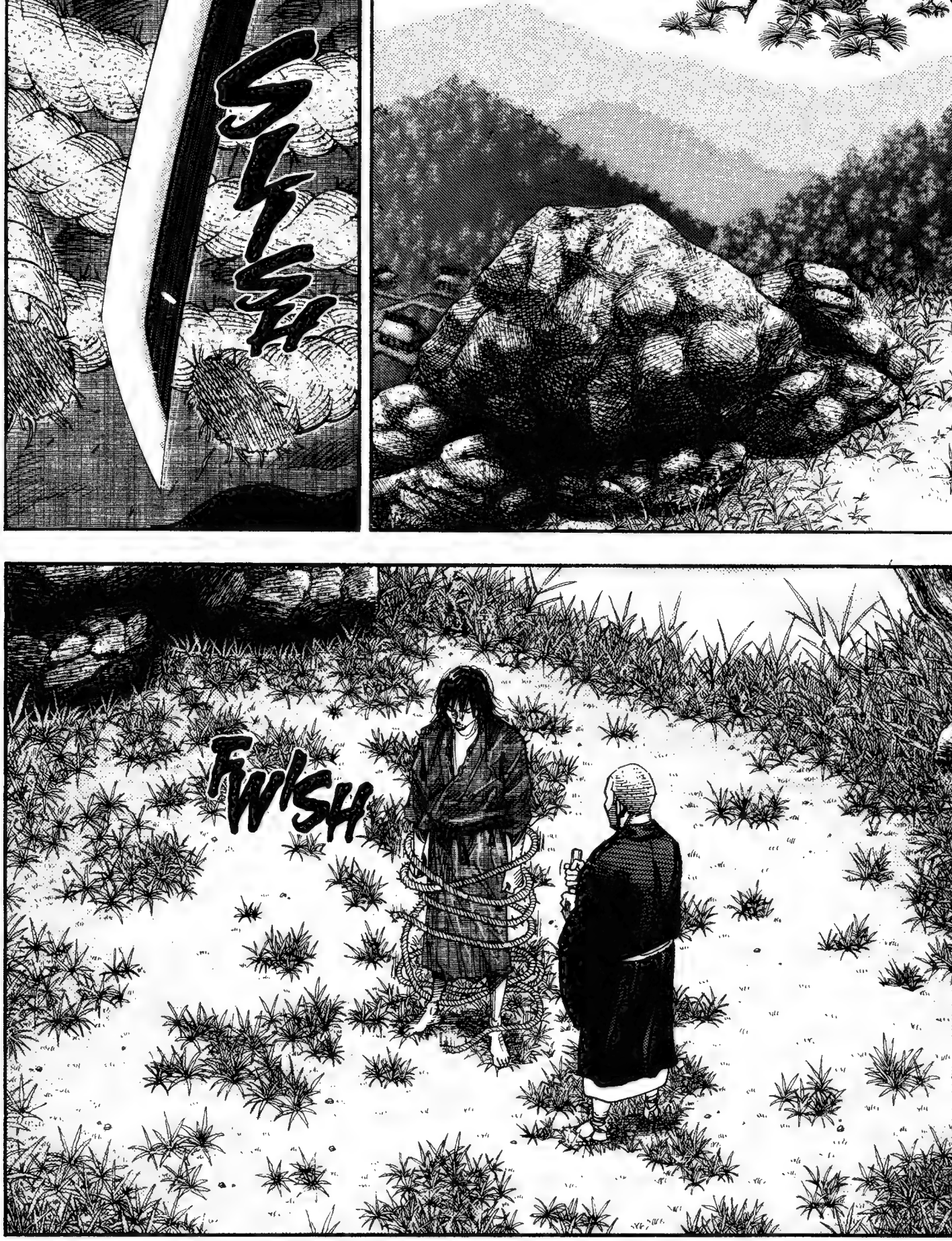

NO.


THAT LIFE IS NOT FOR YOU.


IS IT TRUE...
...TAKUAN?

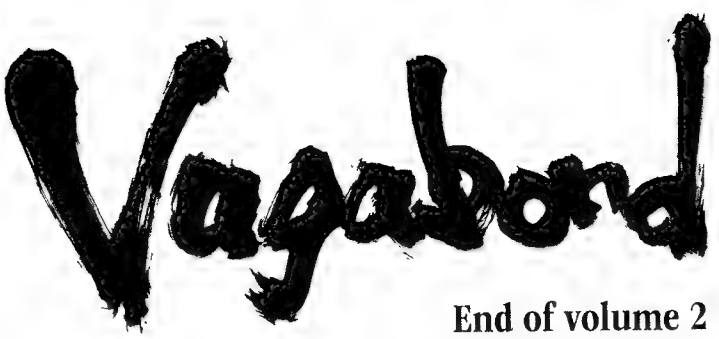



DO I REALLY DESERVE TO LIVE?


SLASH
FWISH


TAKEZŌ...
LIVE ON AND ENDURE THE SHADOWS!!
THERE IS NO LIGHT...
...FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT KNOW DARKNESS...
HEY, THAT SOUNDS PRETTY GOOD!
TAKEZŌ!!
TAKEZŌ!


AND BRIGHTNESS SHALL COME YOUR WAY.
TAKEZŌ!!

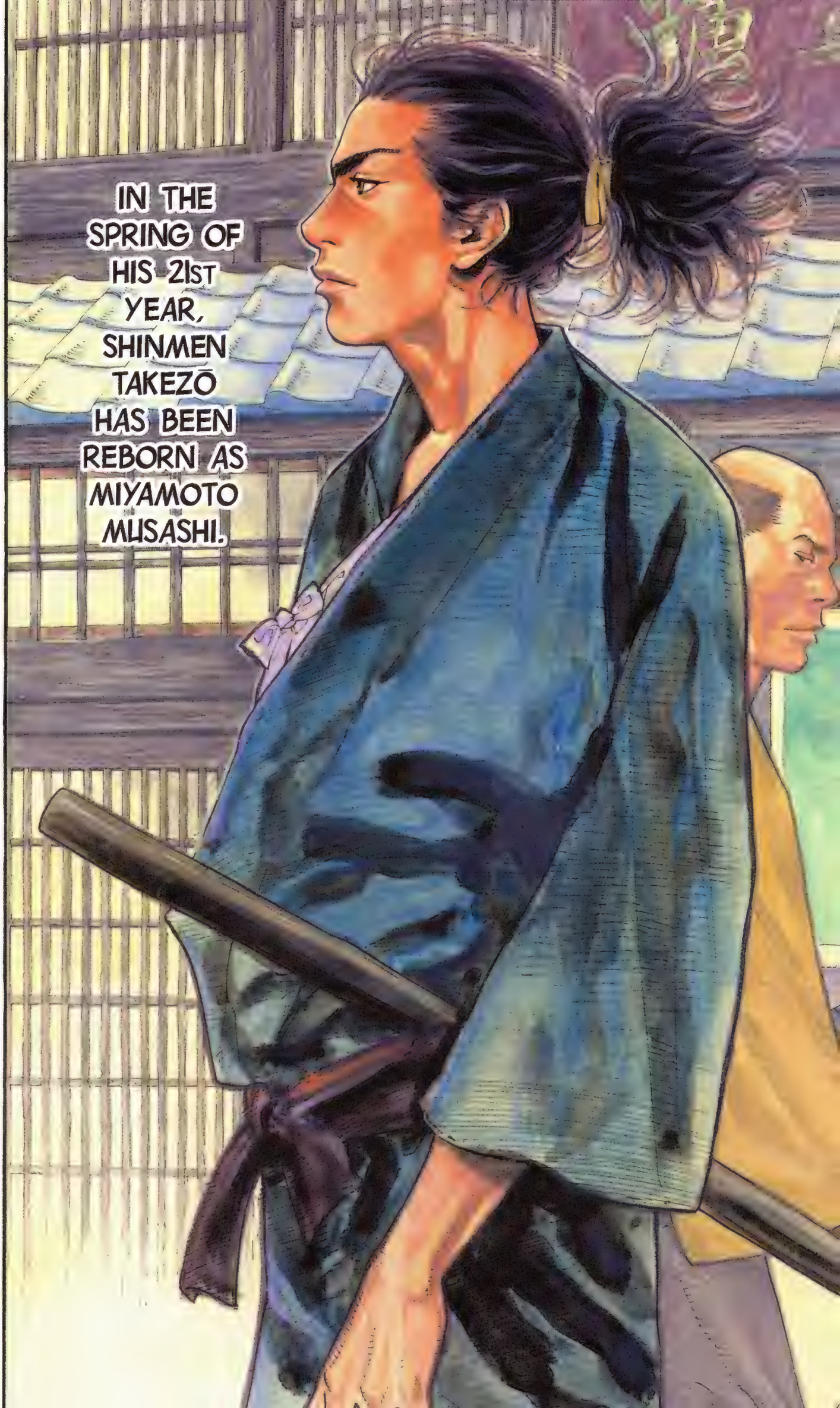


End of volume 2


SCANNED BY :
. DEMETTER
. SUPERJOE
EDITED BY :
. PHANTOM GREYFIRE
HOSTED ON :
COLORED MANGA.COM
Vagabond
*PLEASE SUPPORT THE OFFICIAL RELEASE


SHINMEN TAKEZŌ DIED HERE TODAY.
THAT'S WHAT I'LL TELL THE AUTHORITIES, TOO.
ESPECIALLY GRANNY HON'IDEN.
THAT'S ALL THAT THE VILLAGERS OF MUSASHI NEED TO KNOW.
CARRY MIYAMOTO VILLAGE INSIDE YOURSELF, TAKEZŌ.
BUT NEVER FORGET WHERE YOU CAME FROM, THE PLACE YOU GREW UP.
FROM NOW ON--

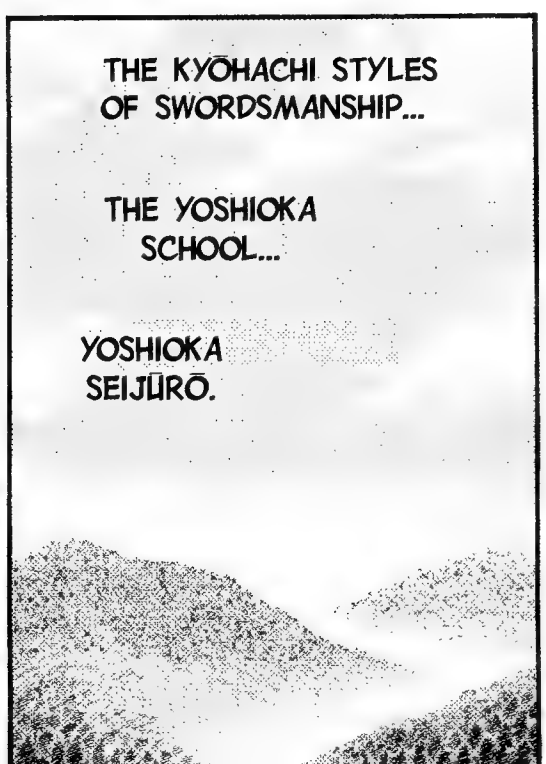

KYOTO
YOU SHALL BE CALLED MIYAMOTO MUSASHI.
Vagabond
vol. 3
#22 Miyamoto Musashi


IN THE SPRING OF HIS 21ST YEAR, SHINMEN TAKEZŌ HAS BEEN REBORN AS MIYAMOTO MUSASHI.

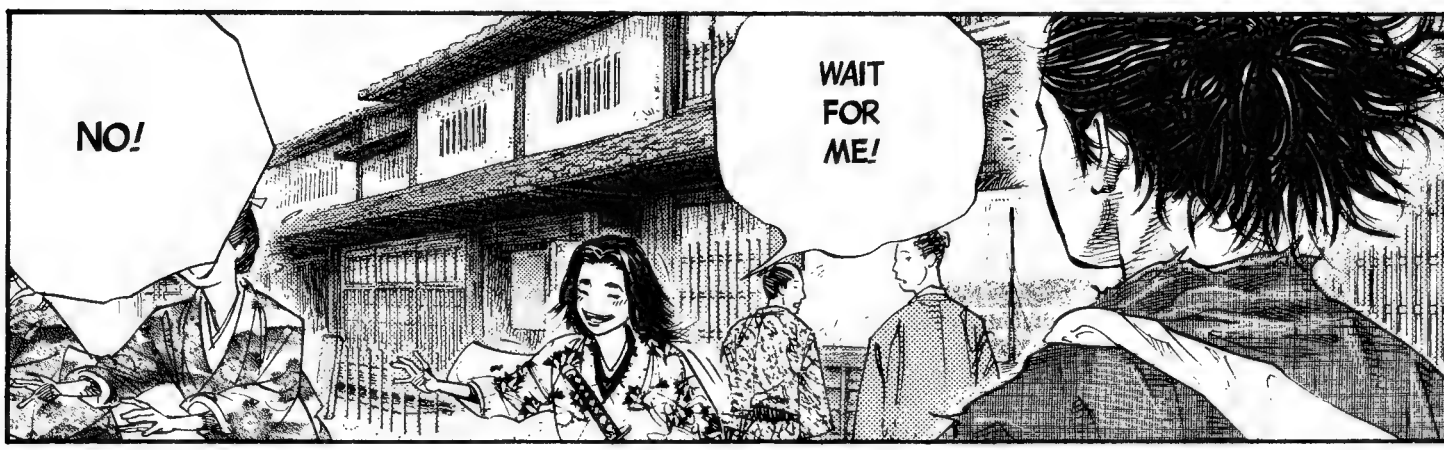

I'M EXCITED.
WHO'S THAT FILTHY KID...?
WHAT'S HE DOING WITH THAT WOODEN SWORD TUCKED UNDER HIS BELT?
HE LOOKS STUPID.
SO THIS IS KYOTO...
IS IT JUST ME? EVERYONE LOOKS SO SOPHISTICATED.

THEIR NAMES ARE EVEN KNOWN IN MIYAMOTO VILLAGE.
MMBL MMBL
THERE ARE MASTER SWORDSMEN HERE RENOWNED THROUGHOUT THE LAND.


NO USE POSTPONING THE INEVITABLE.


THE KYŌHACHI STYLES OF SWORDSMANSHIP...
THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL...
YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ.


WAIT!
STOP IT!


NO!
WAIT FOR ME!


PLEASE!
TUGG
GOTCHA!


TIKL TIKL TIKL TIKL!
HA HA HA HA!
STOP IT!!
HERE'S SOME FOR YOU, TOO!
OH, STOP!
TIKL TIKL TIKL TIKL!
HE'S A SAMURAI, TOO?
NONE FOR ME!
HA HA HA!
I GUESS THERE'S ALL KINDS IN KYOTO.


...


GASP!

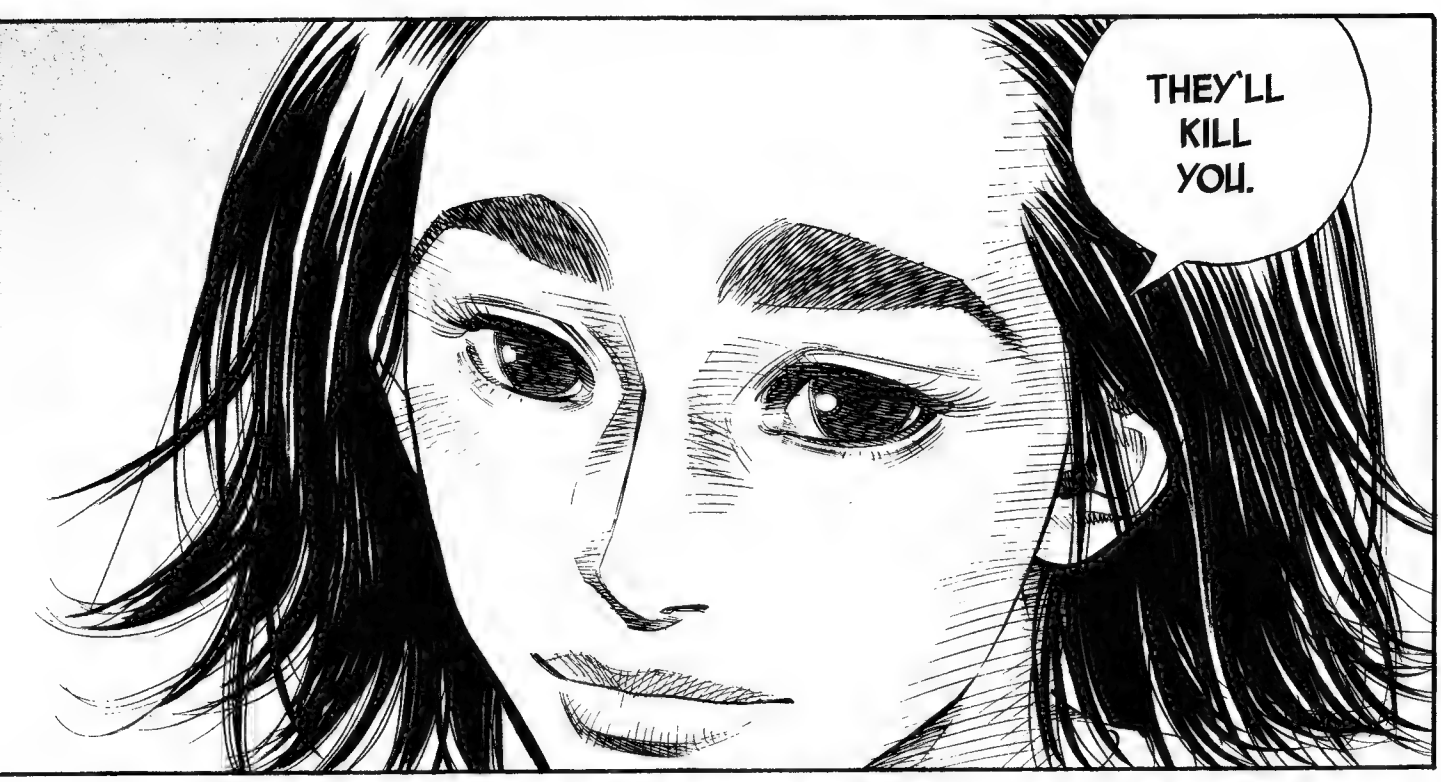

HM?!


I SEE THAT YOU'RE IN TRAINING.
HEADING FOR THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL?

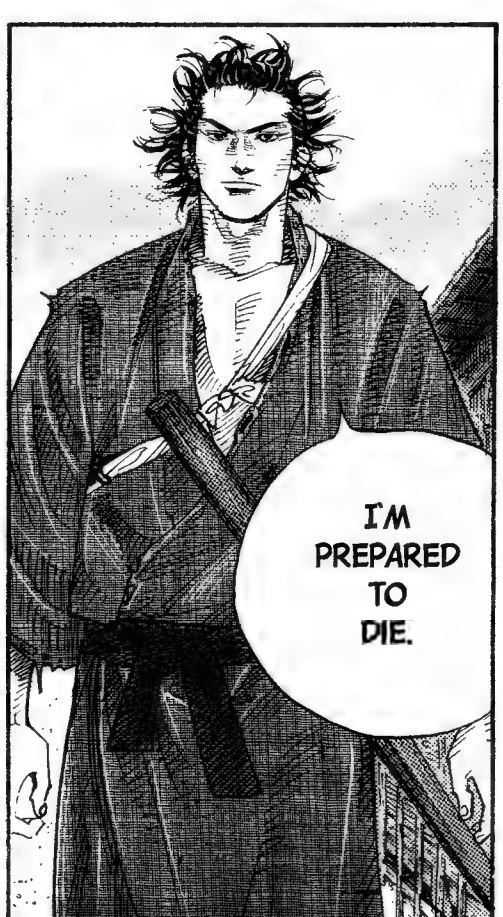

I-I'M SO SORRY.
NO... IT'S OKAY.




YOU GIVE THEM THAT BLOODTHIRSTY LOOK AND THEY'LL CRUSH YOU.
I WOULDN'T GO THERE IF I WERE YOU.
DON'T DO ANYTHING RASH.


THEY'LL KILL YOU.


BUT I *DON'T* PLAN ON JUST THROWING MY LIFE AWAY.


I'M PREPARED TO DIE.



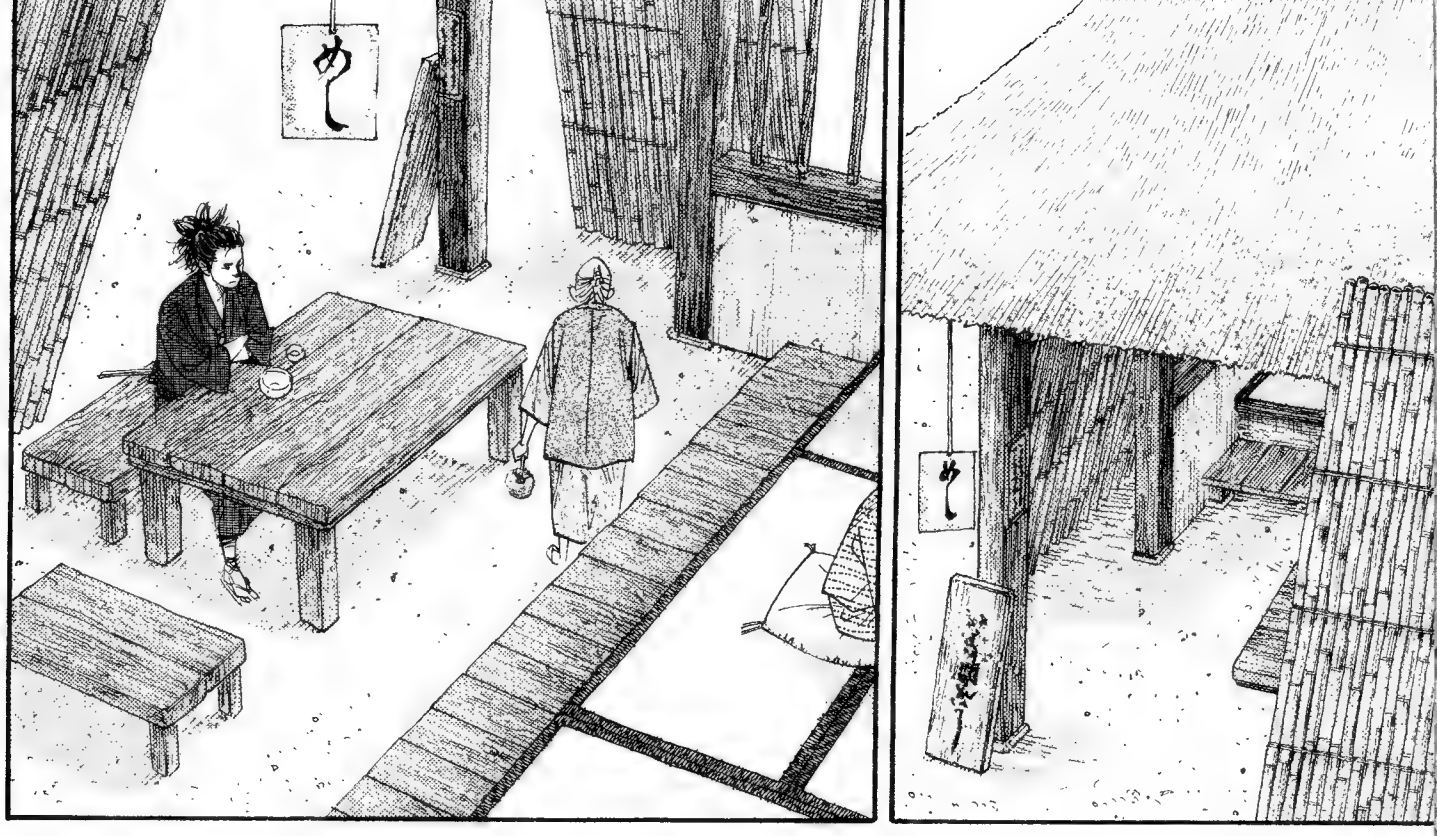

YOU SEE. YOU'RE DEAD...
!!
SMIRK


I'M TERRIBLY SORRY!
HE'S DRUNK.
OH, MY!
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!




THUMP-THMP
THUMP-THMP
THUMP-THMP


I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOU LADIES.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
HMM ...?
YOU WENT TOO FAR!
I WAS SO SCARED!
THAT WASN'T FUNNY!
HE REALLY SEEMS TO HAVE TAKEN TO HER LATELY...
WHAT'S SO GOOD ABOUT HER?
TO SEE THAT GIRL AGAIN?
AKEMI!
I'M COMING!




...IN SAKUSHŪ.
MIYA-MOTO VILLAGE ...

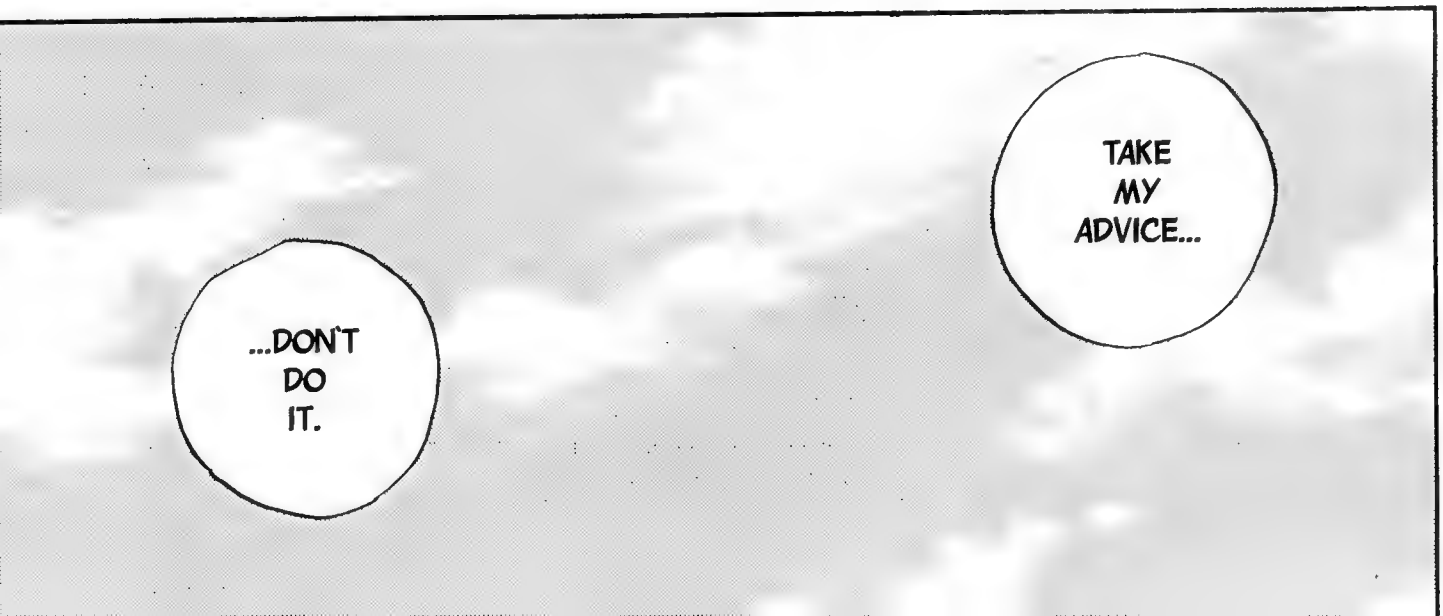

AND YOU PLAN ON CHALLENGING THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL?




SO...
GLIP
GLIP
...WHERE ARE YOU FROM?


EVERY-ONE KNOWS THAT.
NO ONE TAKES ON THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL WITH-OUT GETTING SERIOUSLY INJURED.
THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL HAS THE MOST SKILLED SWORDSMEN AROUND.
YOU'RE BEING VERY FOOLISH.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE SOMEONE AS FOOLISH AS YOU HAS COME AROUND.


AND TO BE ARMED WITH JUST A WOODEN SWORD!
HOW'RE YOU GOING TO CHALLENGE THEM WITH *THAT!?*
IT'S RIDICULOUS!


TAKE MY ADVICE...
...DON'T DO IT.


I STILL PLAN ON BECOMING INVINCIBLE UNDER THE SUN.
ONLY NOW, I'LL REACH MY GOAL BY WAY OF THE SWORD.
I AM SHINMEN--
NO...
吉岡流兵法師範
平安
吉岡兵法
YOSHIOKA KEMPO
MILITARY INSTRUCTOR
TO THE FORMER
SHOGUNATE


...HERE TO CHALLENGE YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ.
MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...


HUH?

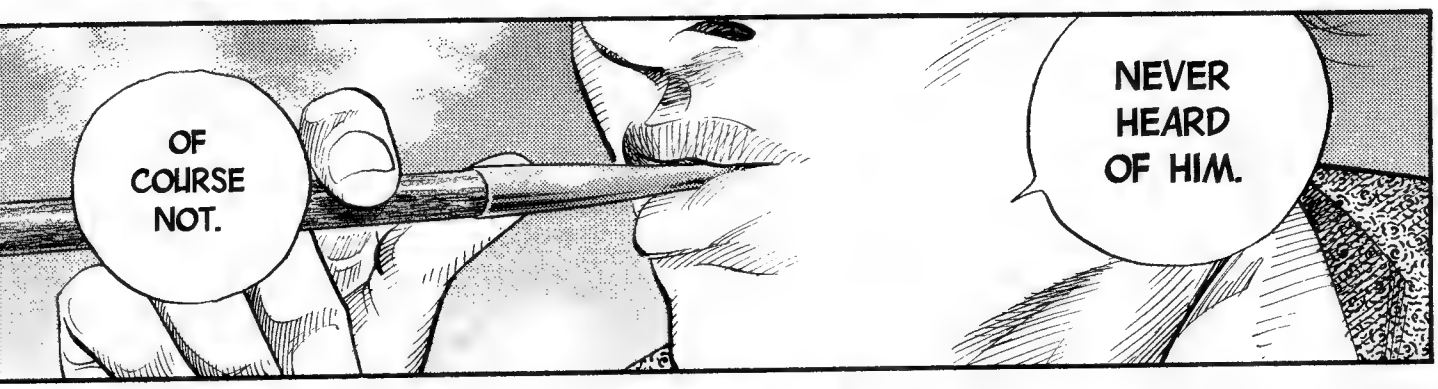

WHAT WAS THAT, YOU COUNTRY HICK?

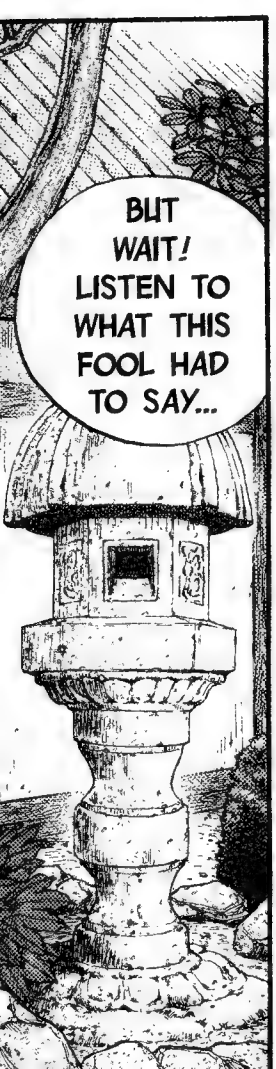

HMPH!


Vagabond


(I ENJOY DRAWING OLD MEN.)
じいちゃん
をかくのは
好き
(COUGH COUGH)

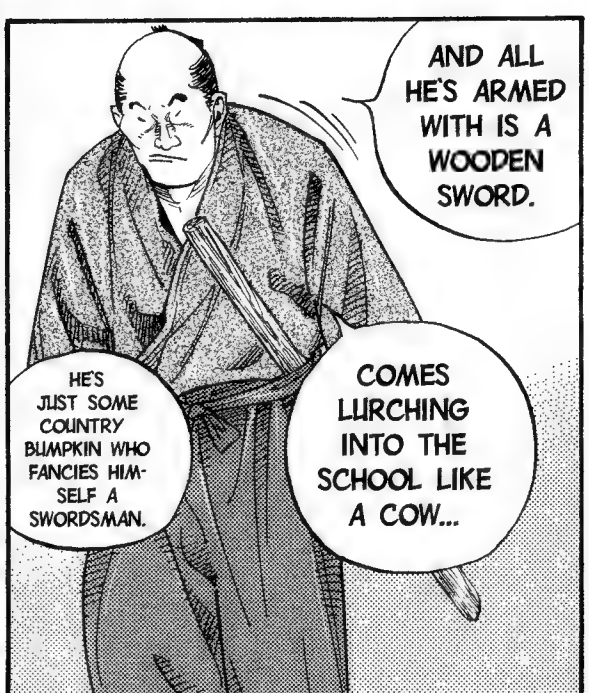

MIYAMOTO MUSASHI?


NEVER HEARD OF HIM.
OF COURSE NOT.


BUT WAIT! LISTEN TO WHAT THIS FOOL HAD TO SAY...


TURN HIM AWAY.

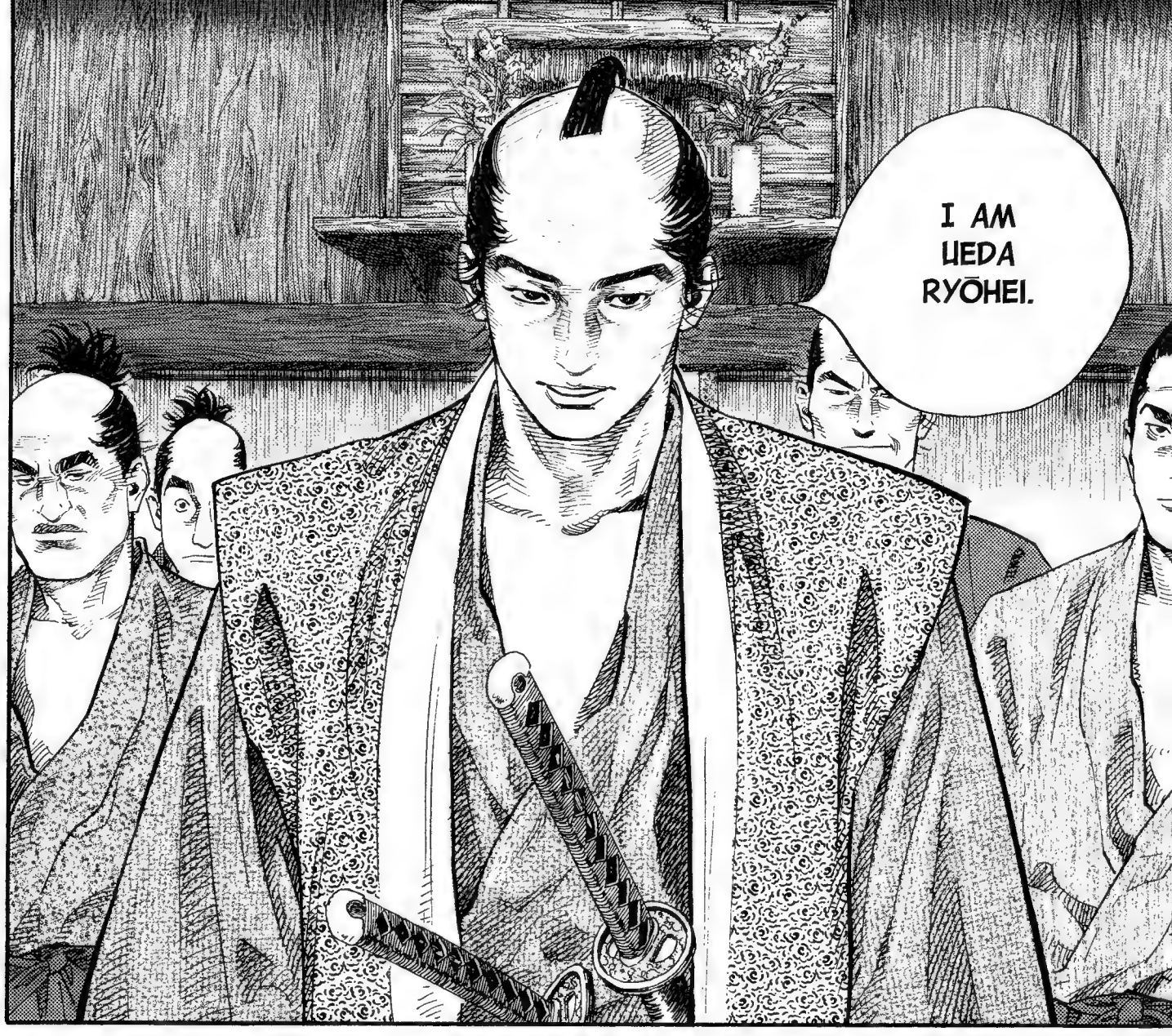

HIS HAIR IS A MESS. IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S EXPLODING.
HIS CLOTHES ARE SO DIRTY YOU CAN'T TELL WHAT COLOR THEY ARE.

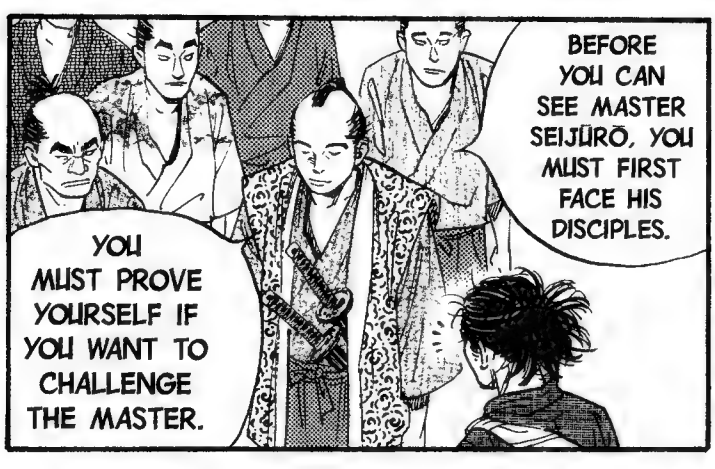

AND ALL HE'S ARMED WITH IS A WOODEN SWORD.
COMES LURCHING INTO THE SCHOOL LIKE A COW...
HE'S JUST SOME COUNTRY BUMPKIN WHO FANCIES HIMSELF A SWORDSMAN.



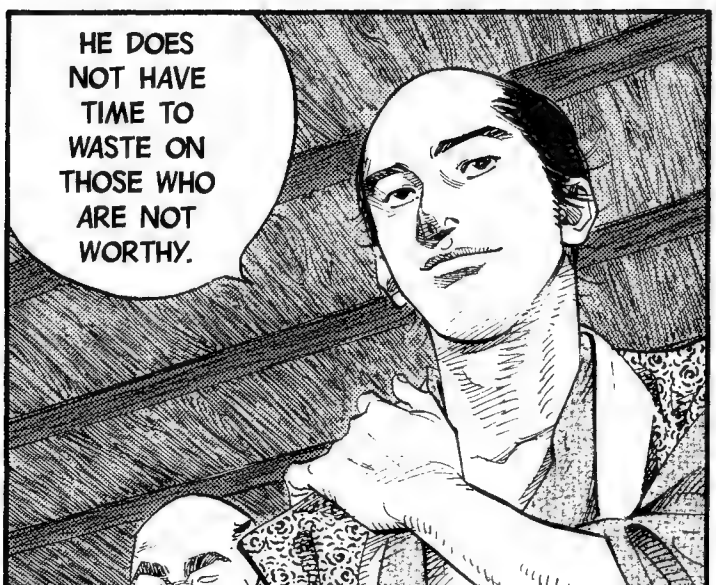


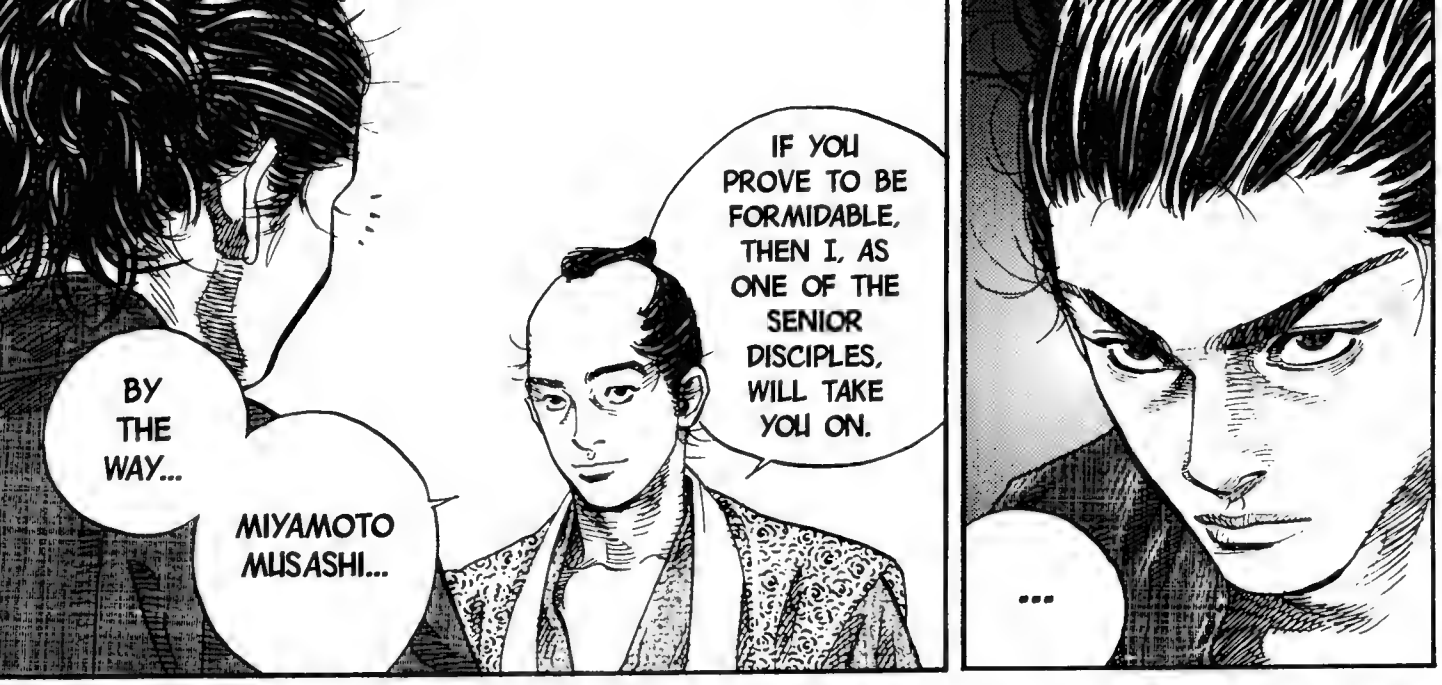
#23 First Step


I AM UEDA RYŌHEI.


BEFORE YOU CAN SEE MASTER SEIJŪRŌ, YOU MUST FIRST FACE HIS DISCIPLES.
YOU MUST PROVE YOURSELF IF YOU WANT TO CHALLENGE THE MASTER.


...I AM A RŌNIN FROM SAKUSHŪ.
MY NAME IS MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...


HE DOES NOT HAVE TIME TO WASTE ON THOSE WHO ARE NOT WORTHY.


BY THE WAY...
MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...
IF YOU PROVE TO BE FORMIDABLE, THEN I, AS ONE OF THE SENIOR DISCIPLES, WILL TAKE YOU ON.
...


...!!
DO YOU HAVE SOMEONE WHO WILL COME TO CLAIM YOUR DEAD BODY?


HUH?
WAIT, I HAVE A QUESTION.
GO AHEAD.




I GET TO FACE YOSHIOKA SEIJURŌ *AFTER* I DEFEAT YOU...
IS THAT RIGHT?
!!


YOU HAVE SUCH CONFIDENCE!!
MIYAMOTO MUSASHI!!

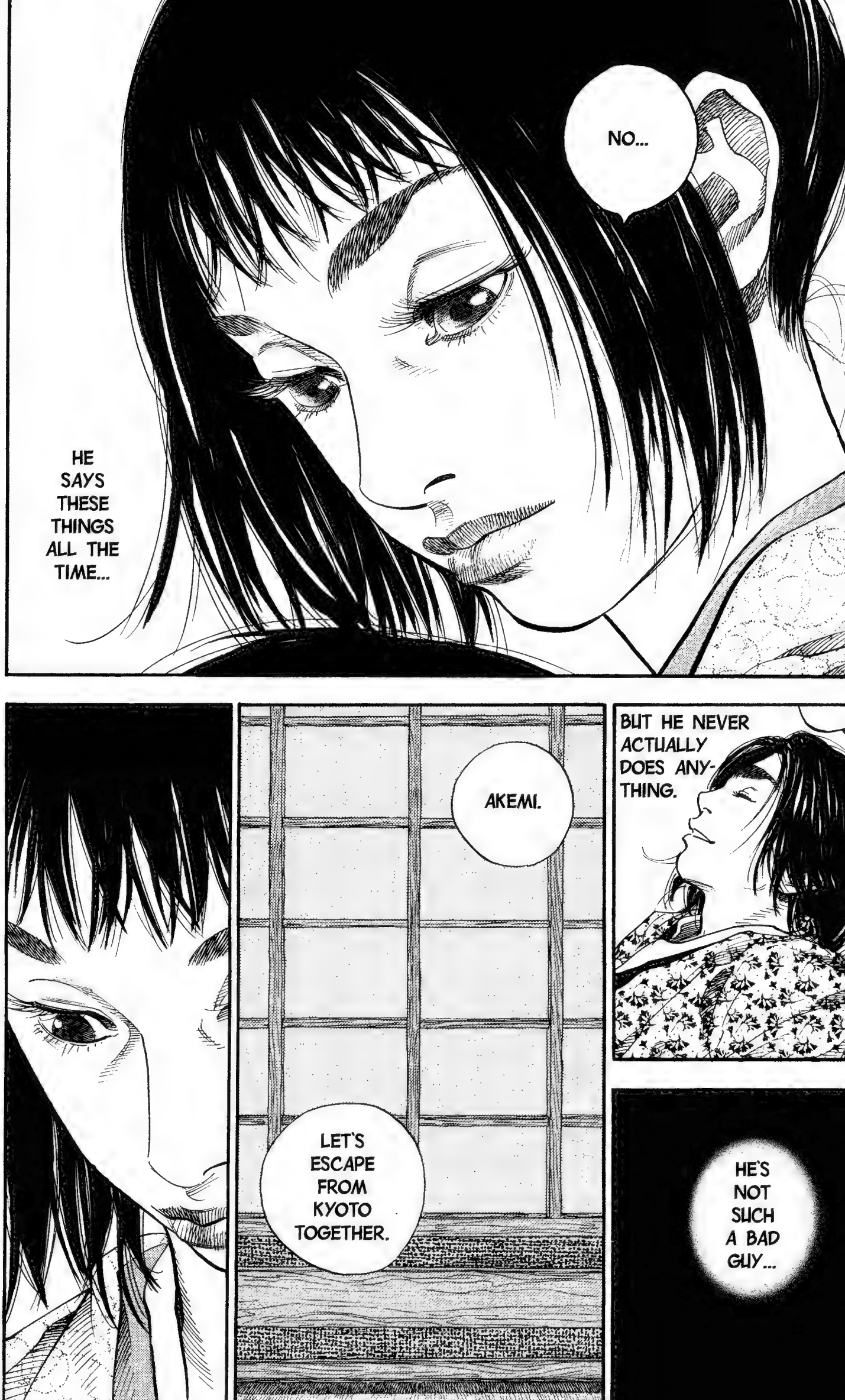

IF I DIE...
...YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT WITH MY BODY...JUST TOSS IT IN THE RIVER OR SOMETHING.
IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER.


DON'T HOLD BACK ON HIM.


HEY.
YES, SIR.



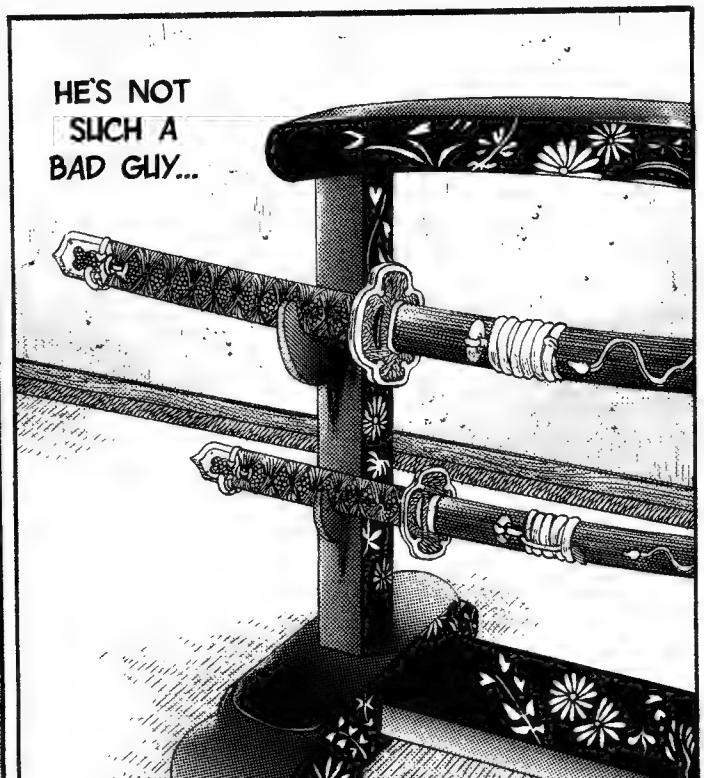

AKEMI.
HERE COMES MY HAND...


NO...
HE SAYS THESE THINGS ALL THE TIME...
AKEMI.
LET'S ESCAPE FROM KYOTO TOGETHER.
BUT HE NEVER ACTUALLY DOES ANY-THING.
HE'S NOT SUCH A BAD GUY...


YOU ARE THE RENOWNED YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ. HOW COULD YOU SAY SUCH A THING...
HE COMES HERE TO HAVE THE SAME CONVERSATION EVERY TIME.


TŌJI!



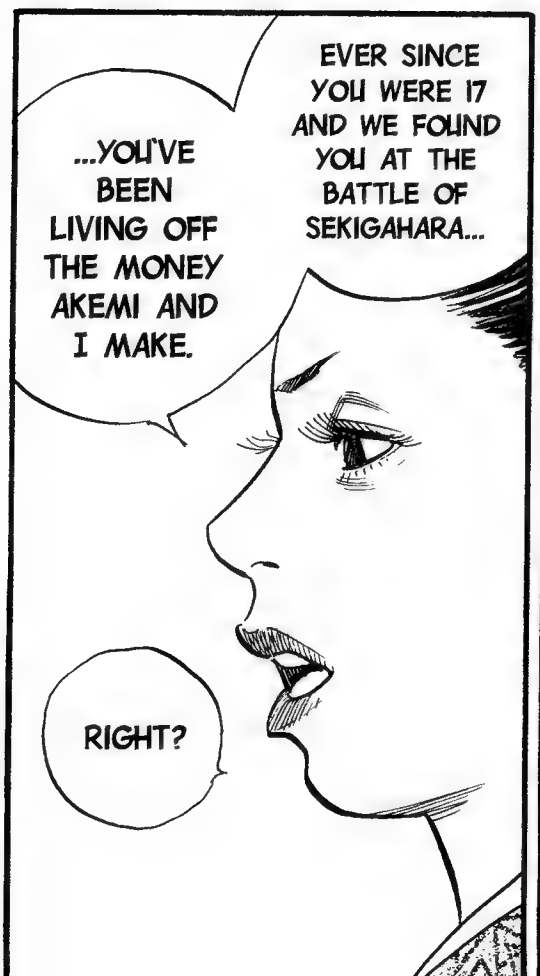

HE'S NOT SUCH A BAD GUY...


TŌJI! YOU'RE HERE WITH THE YOUNG MASTER?
YOU SHOULD COME IN.
OKŌ.
I DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE IN THESE TYPES OF PLACES.
YOU'LL ATTRACT TOO MUCH ATTENTION OUT THERE. COME ON IN!
COME ON, TŌJI...
TŌJI!

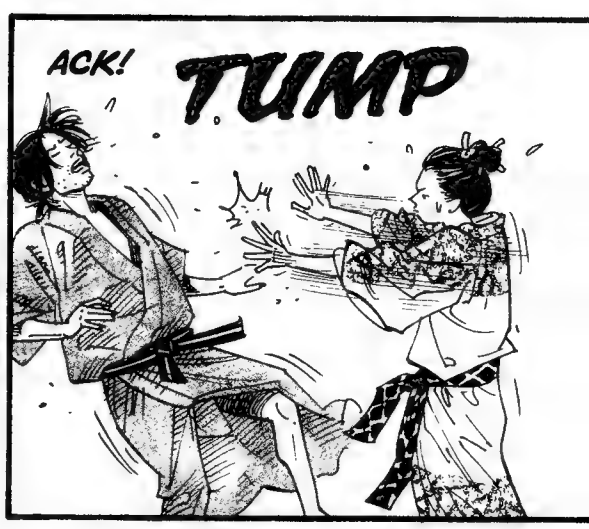

YOU OLD HAG!
WHAT'RE YOU PURRING ABOUT?
GION TOJI, ONE OF THE SENIOR DISCIPLES OF THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL, EH?
HMPH!
FWOOSH
KYAA!
KRRSH
...
OH MY!
AH...
UH...


WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?
CAN'T YOU SEE I'M WORKING!?
YOU COME HERE!!
SLUMP
...


QUIT THIS DAMN JOB!
HOW DARE YOU MAKE A FOOL OF YOUR HUSBAND!?


...YOU'VE BEEN LIVING OFF THE MONEY AKEMI AND I MAKE.
EVER SINCE YOU WERE 17 AND WE FOUND YOU AT THE BATTLE OF SEKIGAHARA...
RIGHT?

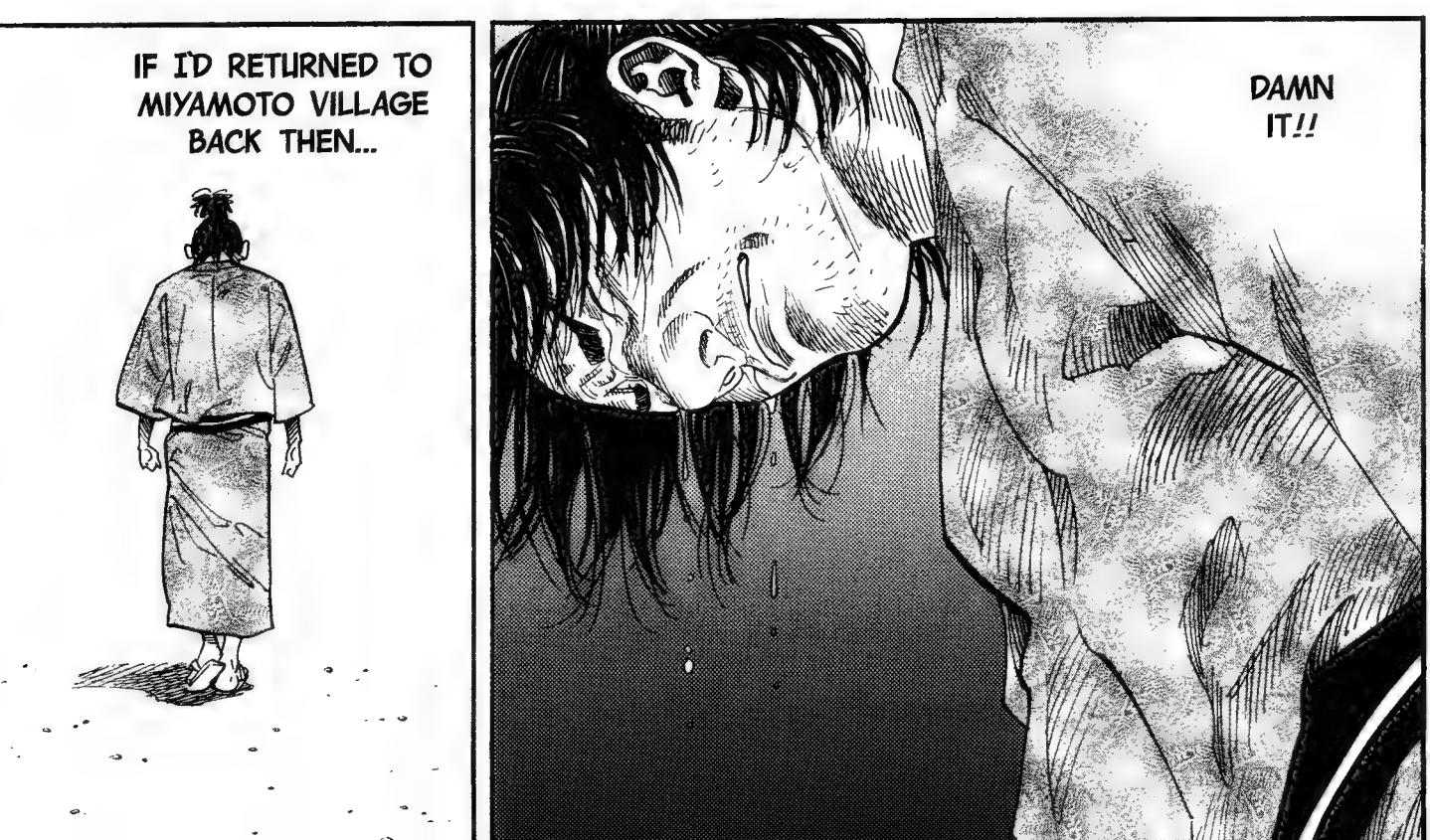

YOU DON'T EVEN ACT LIKE A MAN!
WHO'S PUTTING FOOD ON THE TABLE?
YOU'RE JUST A DRUNK!

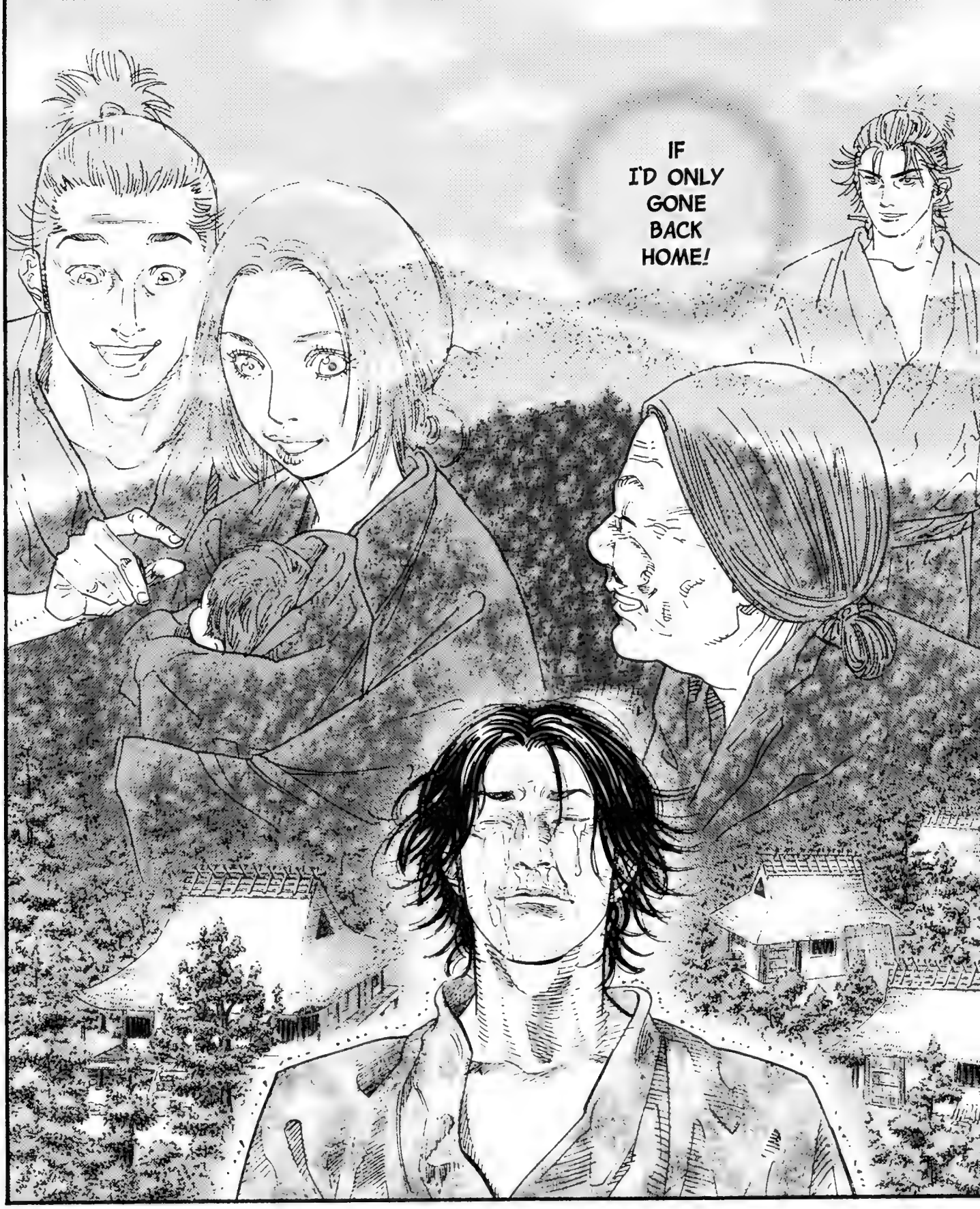

ACK!
TUMP


YOU'RE PITIFUL!
ARE YOU JEALOUS?

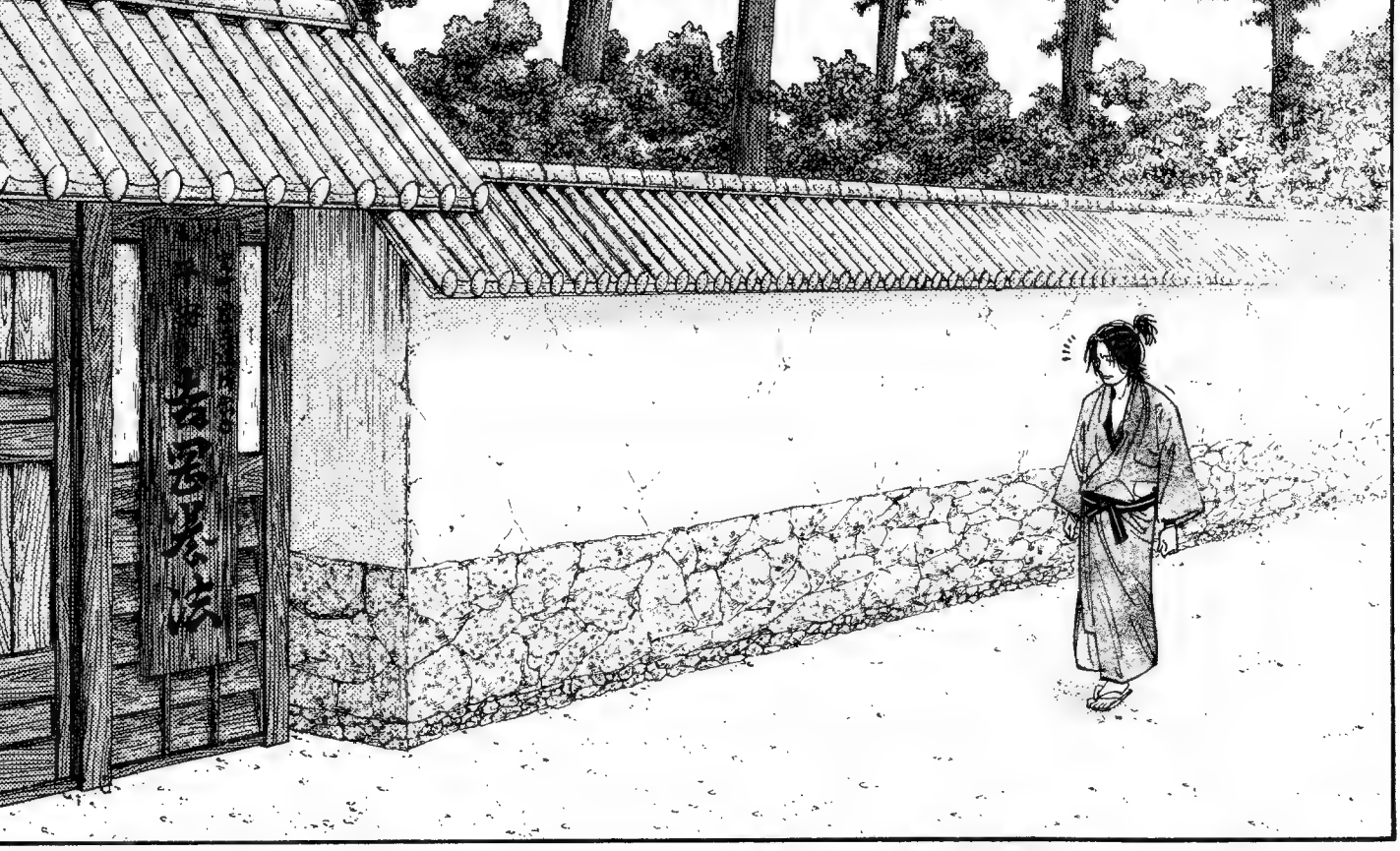

I'M SURE YOU'LL BE FINE WITH WORKING ALL DAY FOR HARDLY ANY PAY.
WELL, YOU'RE JUST A HICK FROM SAKUSHŪ.
I WON'T STOP YOU. GO AHEAD AND LEAVE US. SEE IF I CARE.
I'LL CARRY STONES FOR CASTLE CONSTRUCTION OR DO ANYTHING TO MAKE A LIVING...
I TOLD YOU I'D WORK!!
BUT YOU'RE SO SPOILED, ALL YOU DO IS COMPLAIN ABOUT HOW TERRIBLE THE FOOD WOULD BE...
...OR HOW YOU CAN'T LIVE IN SOME SHACK...


I'M JUST ROTTING INSIDE!
DAMN DAMN DAMN!!


IF I'D RETURNED TO MIYAMOTO VILLAGE BACK THEN...
DAMN IT!!

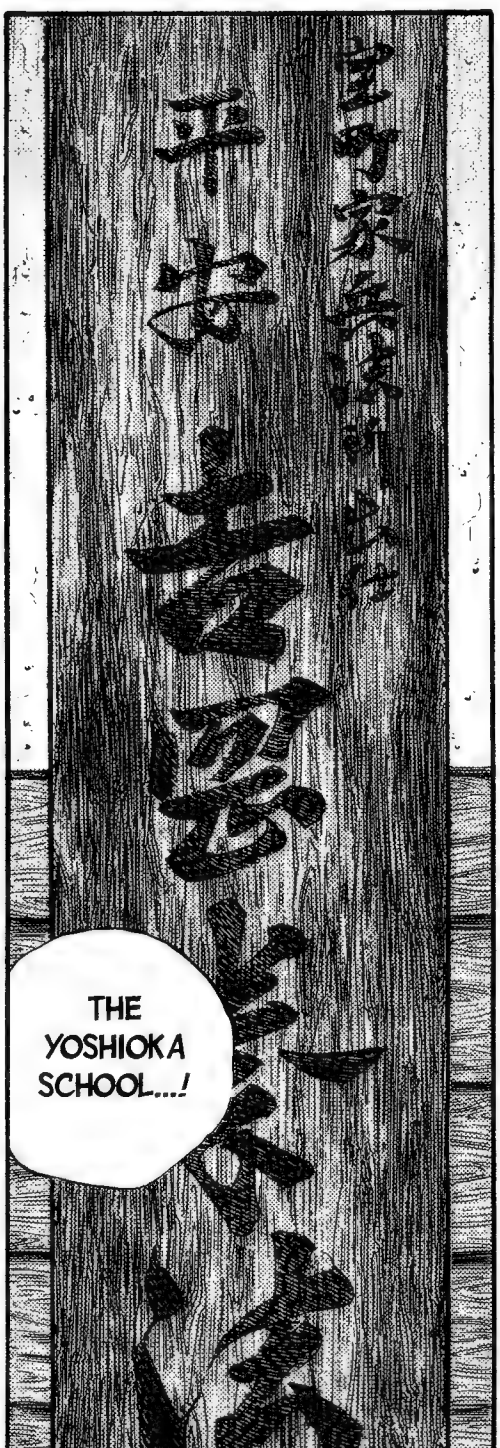

IF I'D ONLY GONE BACK HOME!


BUT IT'S TOO LATE NOW.



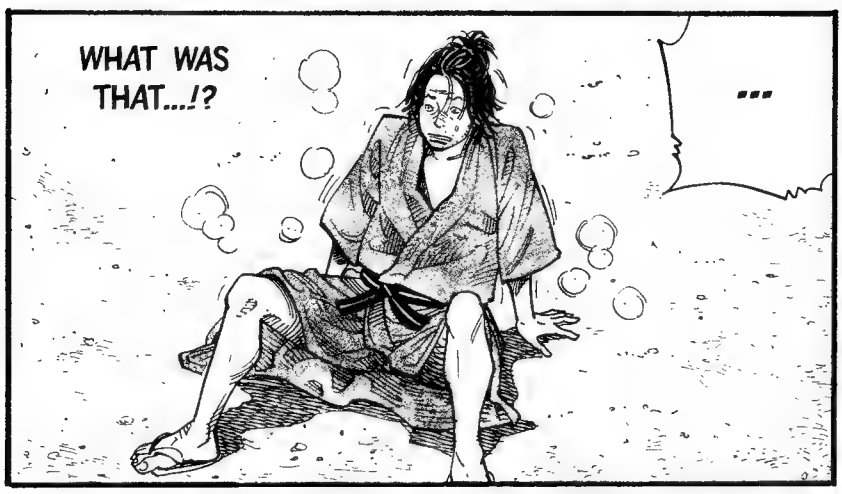

OHHH!
OH, TŌJI.
MAKE A FOOL OF YOUR OWN HUSBAND, WILL YOU...?


HMPH!


THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL...!


HMPH!
I'LL BURN THIS PLACE DOWN!!


ARRGH!
FWAM
!!


WHAT WAS THAT...!?
...


GASP!


GULP


THUNK
ARGH
WHAMM
URGH
WHAT!?
WHAT'S GOING ON!?




MIYAMOTO
MUSASHI...




Vagabond



(I WANT TO GO HOME.)

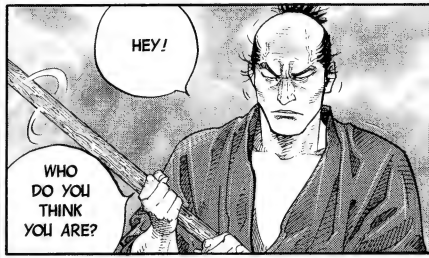

HEY!
HEY!
...
NNGH...
URR...
HUF
HUF
HUF



#24 The Challenge

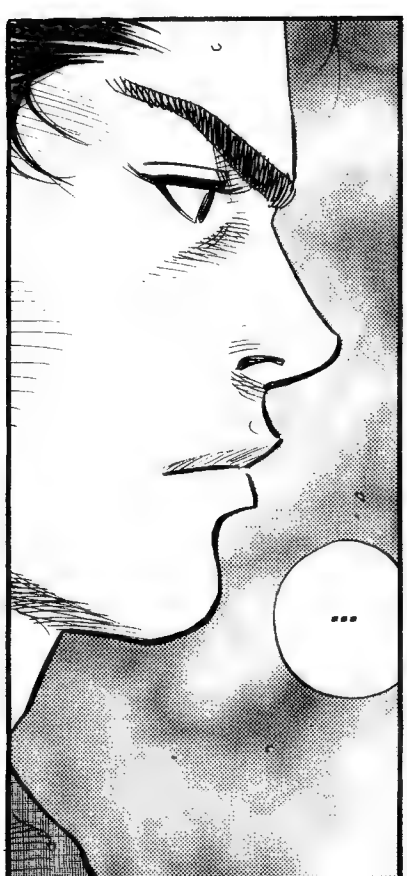


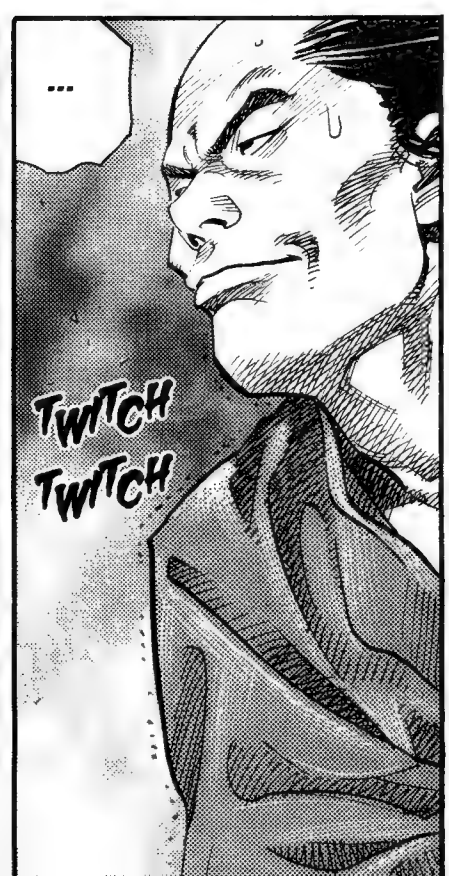







THWAK

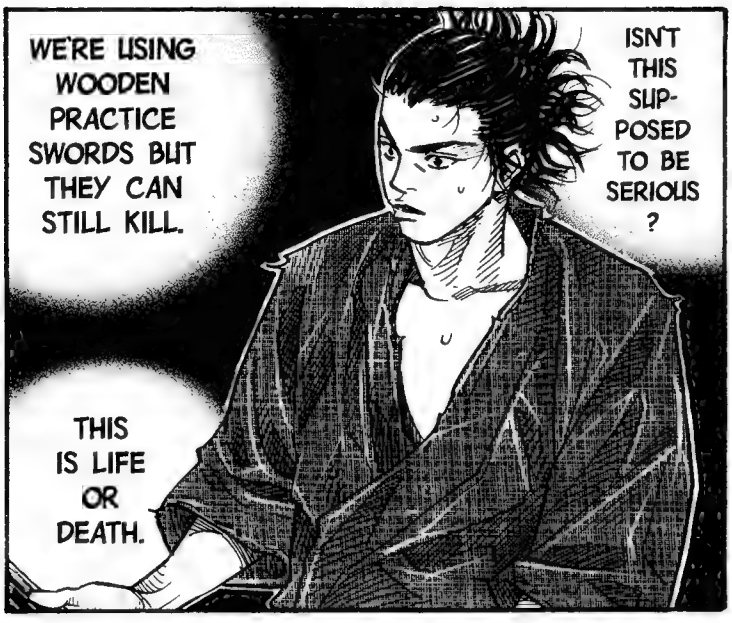

...


...
TWITCH
TWITCH


GASP!


FWOOSH
YAHH!
YAHH!
THAT'S IT, CHIHARA!!
FWOOSH
GET HIM!!
FWOOSH
YAHH!
WHAT'S THE MATTER, MIYAMOTO!?
YOU SCARED!?
YAHH!
FWOOSH
FWOOSH
YAHH!
WHAT IS THIS...?


WHAT KIND OF TRAINING IS THIS?

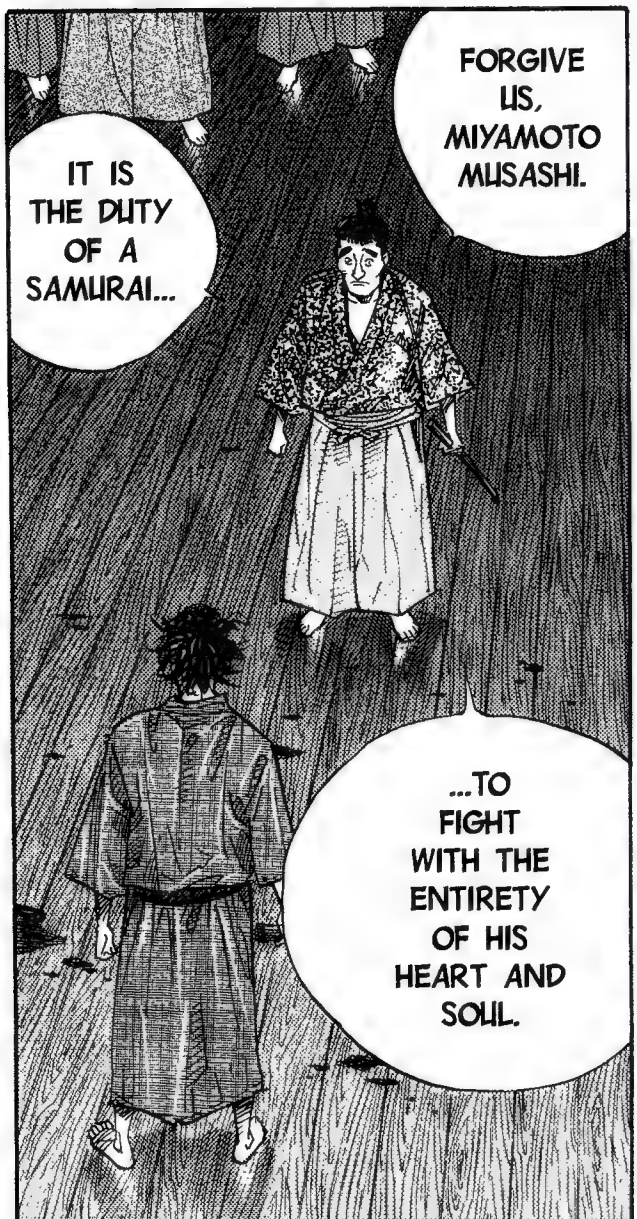

WE'RE USING WOODEN PRACTICE SWORDS BUT THEY CAN STILL KILL.
ISN'T THIS SUP-POSED TO BE SERIOUS ?
THIS IS LIFE OR DEATH.


HE'S SO SLOW.


THIS IS *TOO* EASY...
HE'S *COM-PLETELY* VULNER-ABLE...


WHOK
ARGH!!
WHUD
CHIHARA!!
!!
!!


HE'S DEAD.

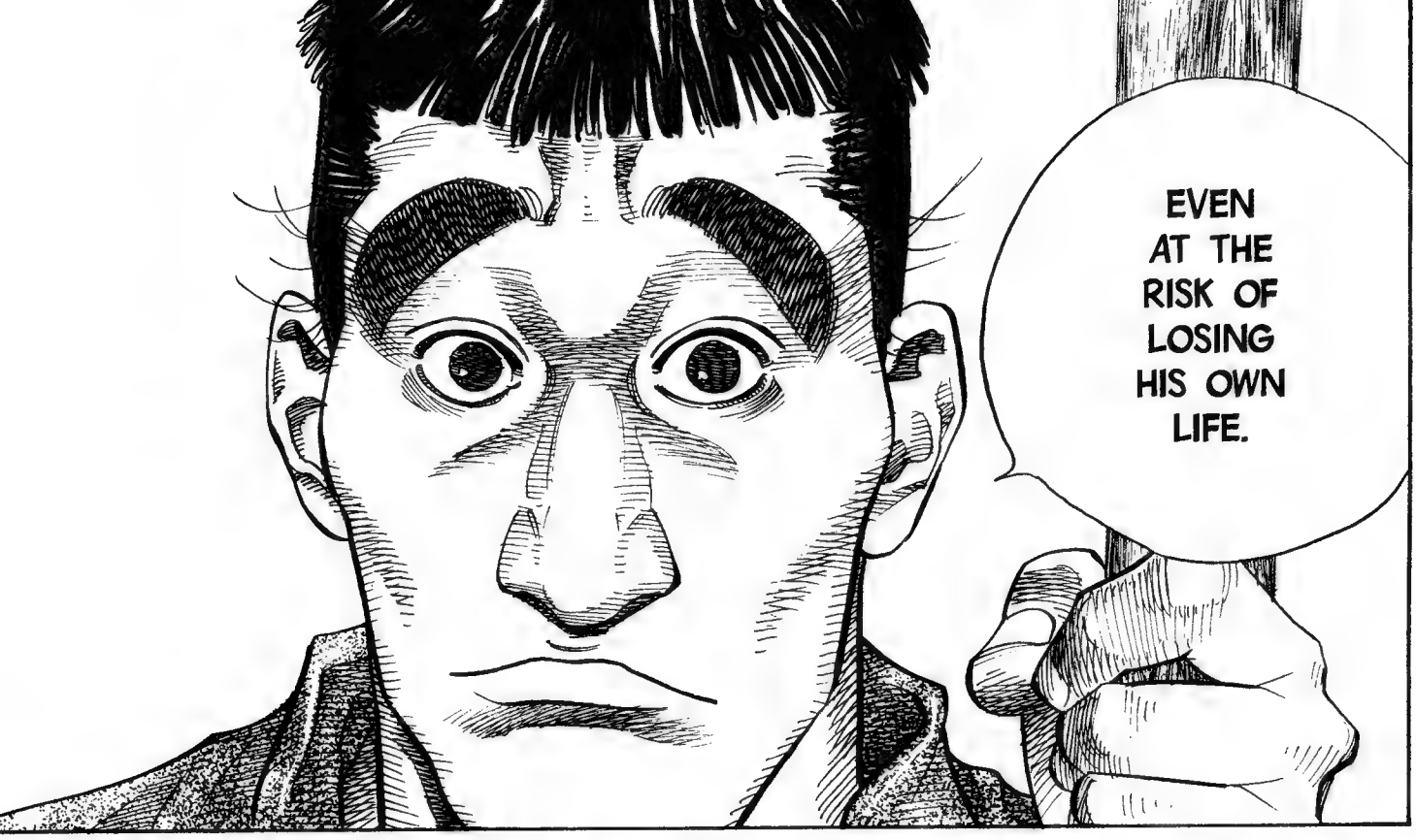

FORGIVE US, MIYAMOTO MUSASHI.
IT IS THE DUTY OF A SAMURAI...
...TO FIGHT WITH THE ENTIRETY OF HIS HEART AND SOUL.




...


...


HE WAS CARELESS AND LET HIS GUARD DOWN.
HE UNDER-ESTIMATED YOU. HIS OWN ARROGANCE KILLED HIM.


EVEN AT THE RISK OF LOSING HIS OWN LIFE.


YES, I AGREE.

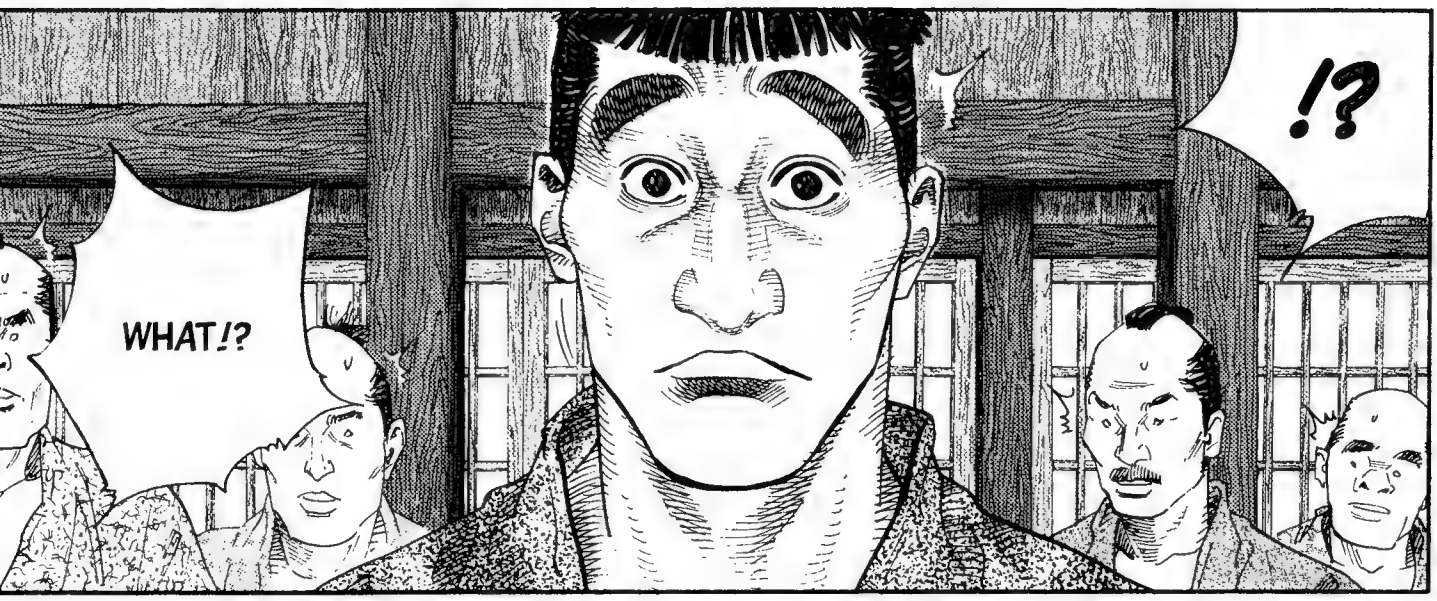

TAKA-SHINA...
HE'S NOT HOLDING BACK...
YEAH...


...


FSH


THP...
THP...
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S COME TO THIS.
YEAH...
TAKASHINA'S TAKING ON THAT DIRTY HICK.
...
THP...
THP...


CAN WE GET STARTED...?
UMM...

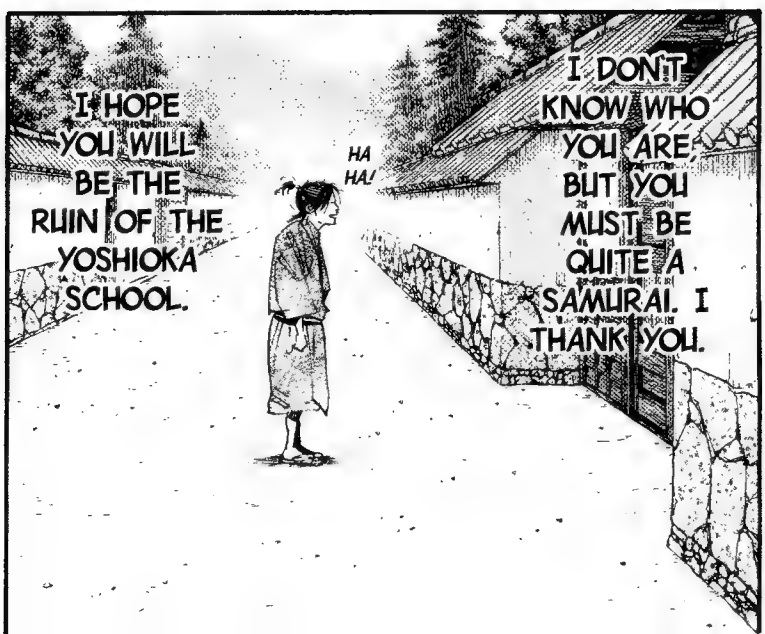

WHAT!?
!?


TAKA-SHINA!!
THOK
ARRGH!


SOMEONE'S CHALLENGING THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL!
AND JUDGING FROM ALL THE COMMOTION ...
...HE'S TAKEN DOWN AT LEAST FIVE OF THEM!!


THERE'S NO MISTAKE!
IT'S REALLY HAPPENING!!


YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ, THE CURRENT HEAD OF THE SCHOOL, IS A LOSER WHO WASTES HIS TIME IN THE PLEASURE QUARTERS WITH OUR AKEMI.
HAH! THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL IS PAST ITS PRIME! IT'S JUST LIVING OFF OF THE REPUTATION OF YOSHIOKA KEMPŌ, THE SCHOOL'S FOUNDER!!


I HOPE YOU WILL BE THE RUIN OF THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL.
HA HA!
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, BUT YOU MUST BE QUITE A SAMURAI. I THANK YOU.


SHUF


OH, TŌJI...
AND THAT SENIOR DISCIPLE, GION TŌJI, ALWAYS COMING TO SEE OKŌ...
DAMN!!

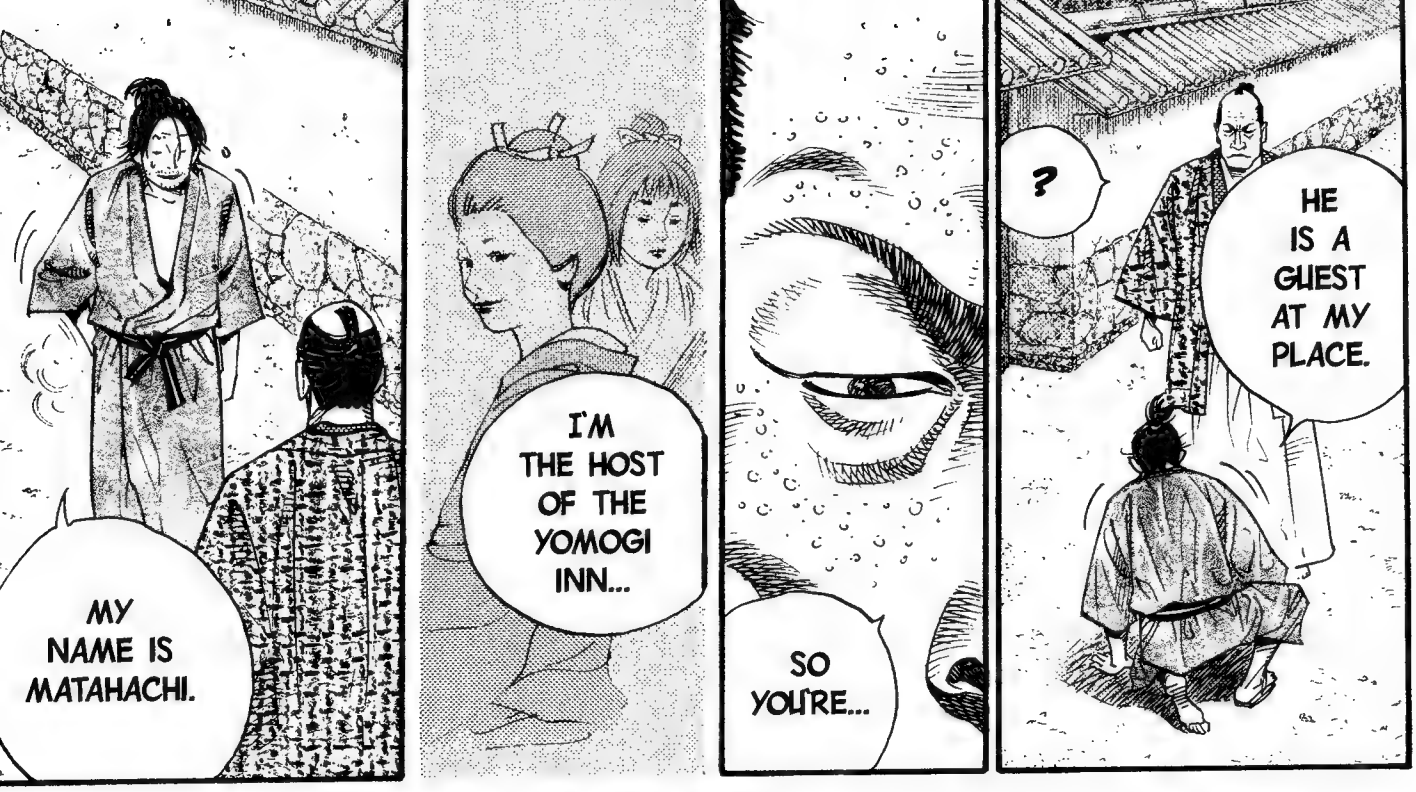

YOU! THERE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
HUH?


!?
GASP!
WHY ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY?
WH- WHO'RE YOU?
UR!
WHUD
ARGH!
KINCH


...DENSHICHIRŌ.
YOSHIOKA...
YOSHIOKA DENSHICHIRŌ!?
!!


YOU HAVE SOME BUSINESS WITH THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL?
UM...
HOW BAD CAN MY LUCK GET!?
SEIJŪRŌ'S YOUNGER BROTHER!!
THIS IS ONE PERSON I NEVER WANTED TO MEET...
AND NOW I SEE WHY.
HE'S THE YOUNGER BROTHER, BUT PEOPLE SAY HE'S MORE SUITED TO BE THE HEAD OF THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL.
UNLIKE HIS PLAYBOY BROTHER, DENSHICHIRŌ IS COMPLETELY DEDICATED TO HIS SWORDSMANSHIP.


MY BROTHER?
WHEN I HEARD SOME STRANGE CRIES FROM THE DOJO...
...I THOUGHT THIS MIGHT BE AN EMERGENCY.
I-I WAS JUST WALKING BY...
...SO I THOUGHT I SHOULD INFORM MASTER SEIJŪRŌ.


MY NAME IS MATAHACHI.
I'M THE HOST OF THE YOMOGI INN...
SO YOU'RE...
?
HE IS A GUEST AT MY PLACE.


WHY AM I SUCH A SNIVELING --?
FIP FIP
WE HAVE THE HONOR OF BEING PATRONIZED BY THE YOUNG MASTER.


NNGH!
KRAK

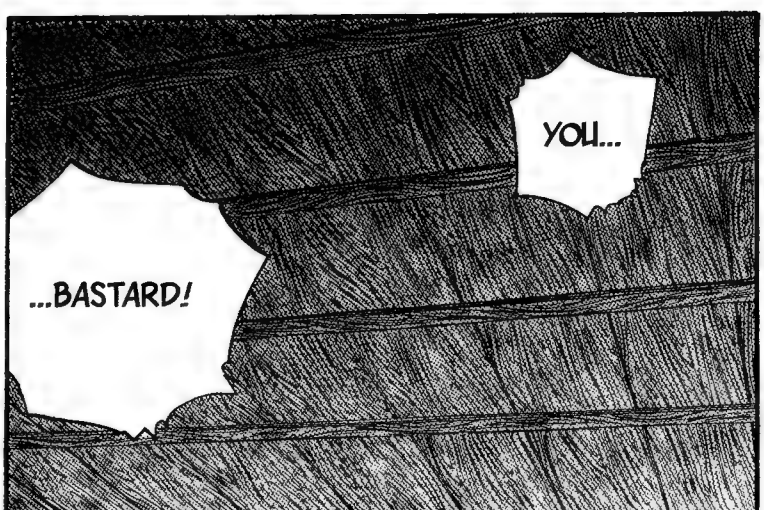

WHUD


HOW CAN THAT HEDONIST...
...BE THE HEAD OF OUR SCHOOL?


ARGH!
KRAK
YAHH!


...!!


HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF


YOU...
...BASTARD!


UEDA...
I'M STRONG.
I'M STRONG ...
I'M STRONG ENOUGH...
...TO TAKE ON THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL!!

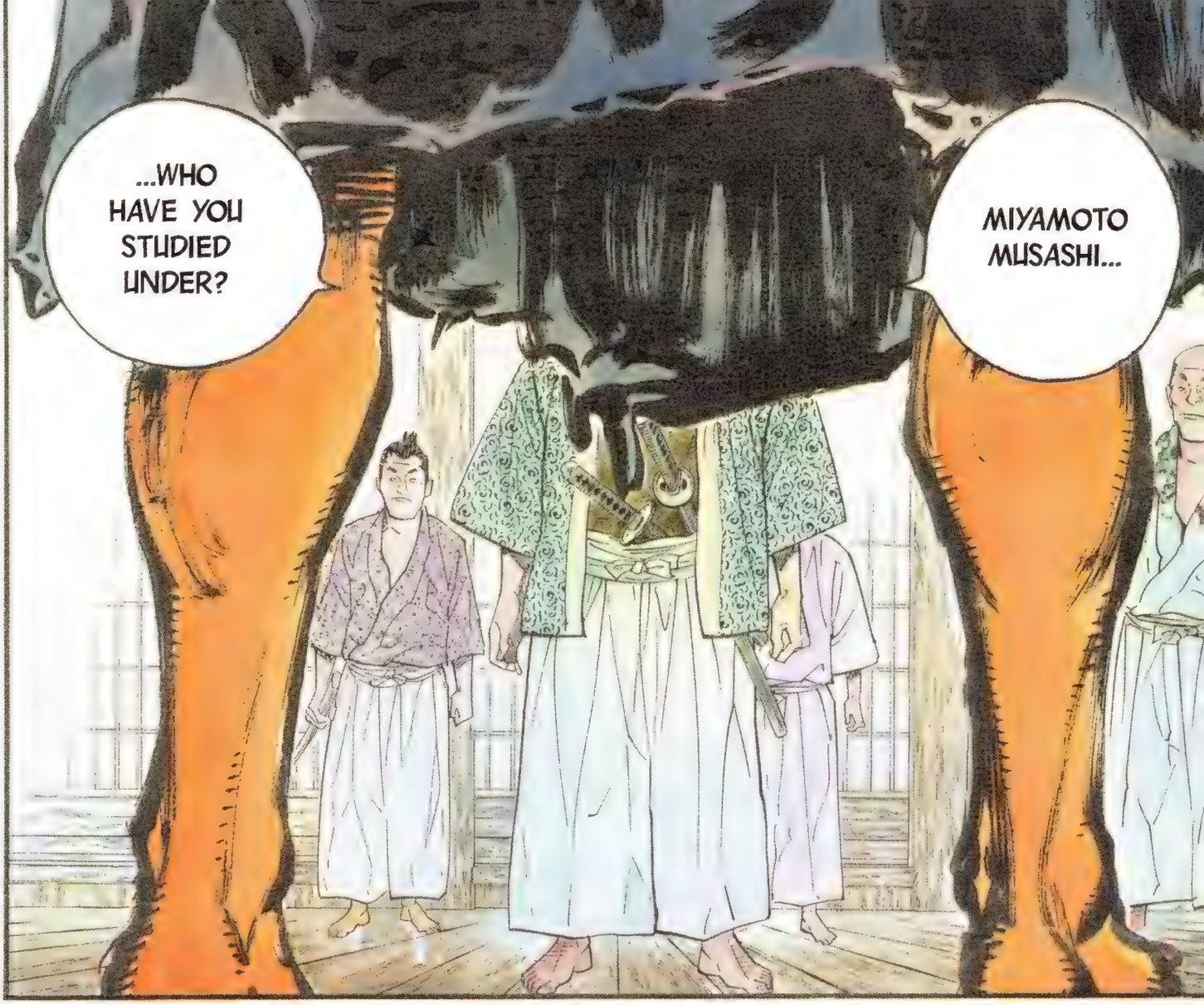

Vagabond


(SILENCE...)


I CAN BEAT THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL!!
...
URRGH...
I CAN TAKE THESE GUYS ON...
ARGH...
...
I CAN DO THIS!!
MY SKILL CAN COMPETE WITH THE BEST SWORDSMEN IN THE LAND!



#25 Chaos at the Yoshioka School


...WHO HAVE YOU STUDIED UNDER?
MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...

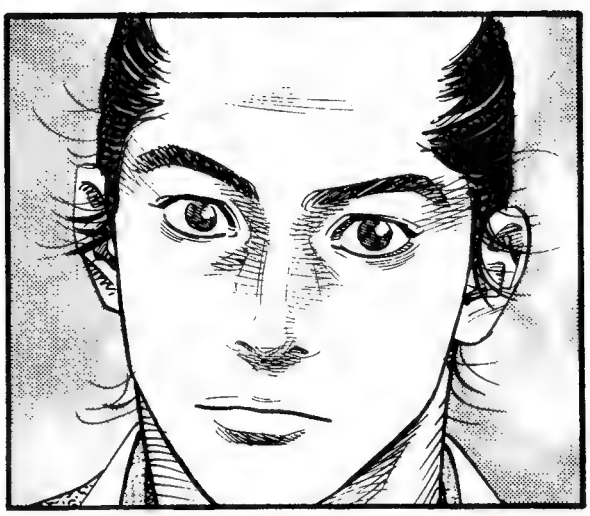

FINALLY, ONE OF THE LEADERS!!

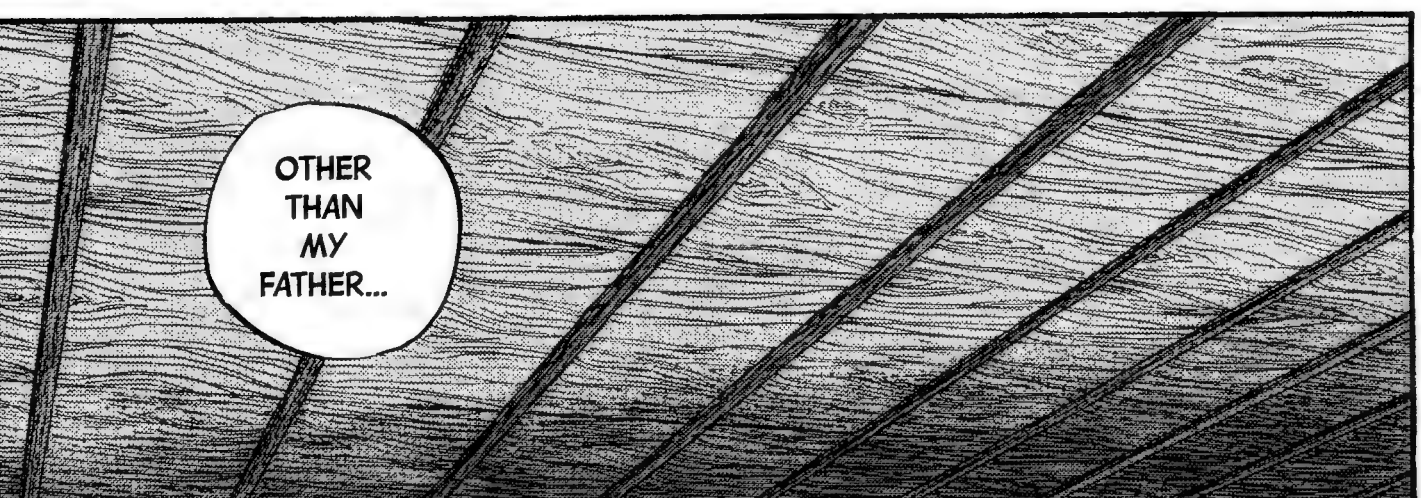

UEDA RYŌHEI...


I GUESS THAT YOU COULD SAY THAT MY FATHER, SHINMEN MUNISAI, WHIPPED ME INTO SHAPE.
...IN PARTICULAR.
NO ONE...

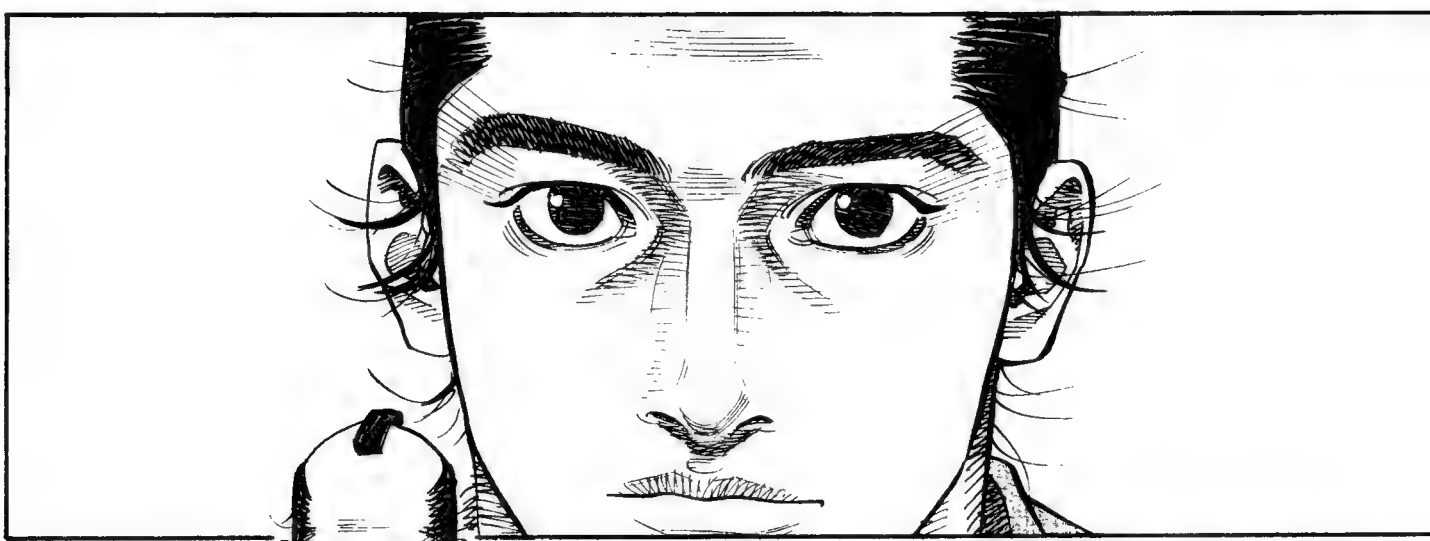

SHINMEN MUNISAI?


HUH?




OTHER THAN MY FATHER...


...THE MOUNTAINS AND EVERYTHING IN THEM HAVE BEEN MY ONLY OTHER TEACHERS...




SHALL WE BEGIN?


ALL RIGHT THEN.


LIEDA SHOULDN'T WASTE HIS TIME!
WHAT!?
THAT GUY HASN'T EVEN MASTERED ANY STYLE.
LET'S GET STARTED...
YES...
COUNTRY HICK!
WHAT IS HE, A MONKEY?!
THE MOUNTAIN HIS MASTER?
HIS POSITION DOESN'T RESEMBLE ANY PARTICULAR STYLE.
HIS STANCE HAS NO SET FORM...
...


HE WAS A DISCIPLE OF THE FOUNDER.
YEAH.
UEDA RYŌHEI...
HE'S JUST AS SKILLED AS SEIJŪRŌ AND DENSHICHIRŌ.
A PRODIGY.


SHINMEN MUNISAI...!!
BACK THEN, IT WAS EVEN RUMORED THAT UEDA MIGHT BECOME HEAD OF THIS SCHOOL.


THIS MIYAMOTO MUSASHI JUST MIGHT CAUSE THIS SCHOOL A BIT OF TROUBLE...

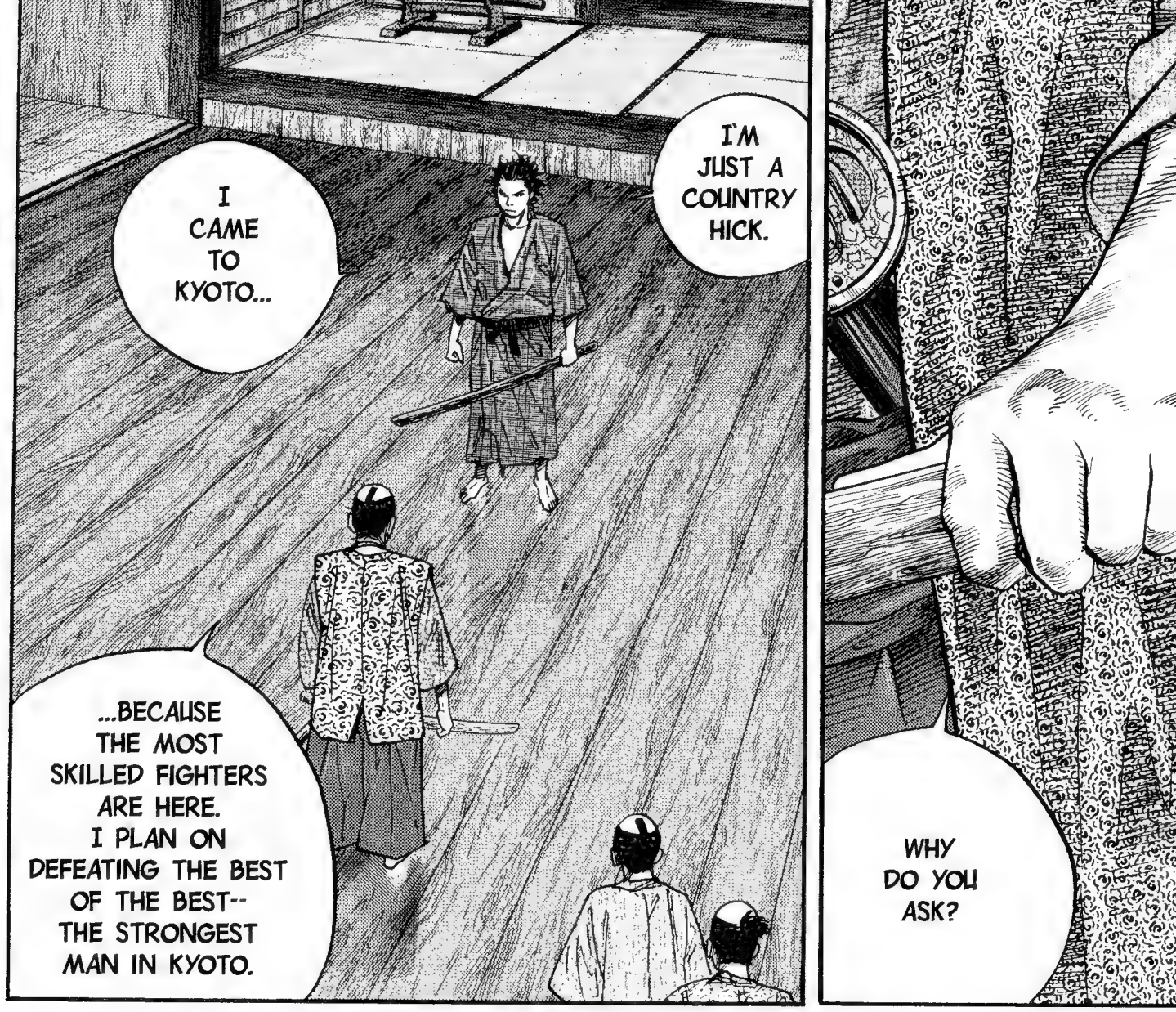

MASTER KEMPŌ...


SO THE SON OF SHINMEN MUNISAI HAS COME TO CHALLENGE THE YOSHIKA SCHOOL...


FWOOSH
AT THE VERY LEAST, PERHAPS I SHOULD INJURE ONE OF HIS ARMS.


THOK
TUGG
!!
WHAT STRENGTH!!


A DIRECT HIT WITH A BLOW LIKE THAT COULD EASILY CRUSH A MAN'S SKULL.
AMAZING STRENGTH COMBINED WITH MAGNIFICENT SWORD MOVEMENT!!
...
GASP!
HOW ARE YOU RANKED AS A FIGHTER HERE IN KYOTO?
I WANT TO KNOW...
...PLEASE.
!?
...
WHAT NUMBER ARE YOU?
UEDA...
NUMBER?


I CAME TO KYOTO...
I'M JUST A COUNTRY HICK.
...BECAUSE THE MOST SKILLED FIGHTERS ARE HERE. I PLAN ON DEFEATING THE BEST OF THE BEST-- THE STRONGEST MAN IN KYOTO.
WHY DO YOU ASK?


WHAT A FOOL...
THIS GUY'S AN IDIOT...


I'M ASKING BECAUSE ...
AFTER I DEFEAT YOU I WANT TO KNOW HOW CLOSE I AM...
GLARE!
OF COURSE HE IS!!
YOU'RE FINISHED !!
YOU'RE A NOBODY!
I GET THE FEELING...
...THAT YOU'RE PRETTY STRONG.


...TO BECOMING INVINCIBLE UNDER THE SUN.


SOMEONE HAS THE NERVE TO BARGE INTO OUR SCHOOL...
...AND TALK BIG ABOUT BEING INVINCIBLE ...?


ALL BECAUSE MY BROTHER CAVORTS AROUND AND MAKES A FOOL OF HIMSELF!!
THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL'S REPUTATION IS IN DECLINE...
!!!
THUD
THUD
LIEDA, THAT'S ENOUGH.
YOU'RE TOO SOFT. YOU WERE PROBABLY THINKING IT WOULD BE ENOUGH TO CRUSH HIS ARM.
BUT A BROKEN ARM WON'T STOP THIS GUY FROM TALKING.
SENSEI...
...

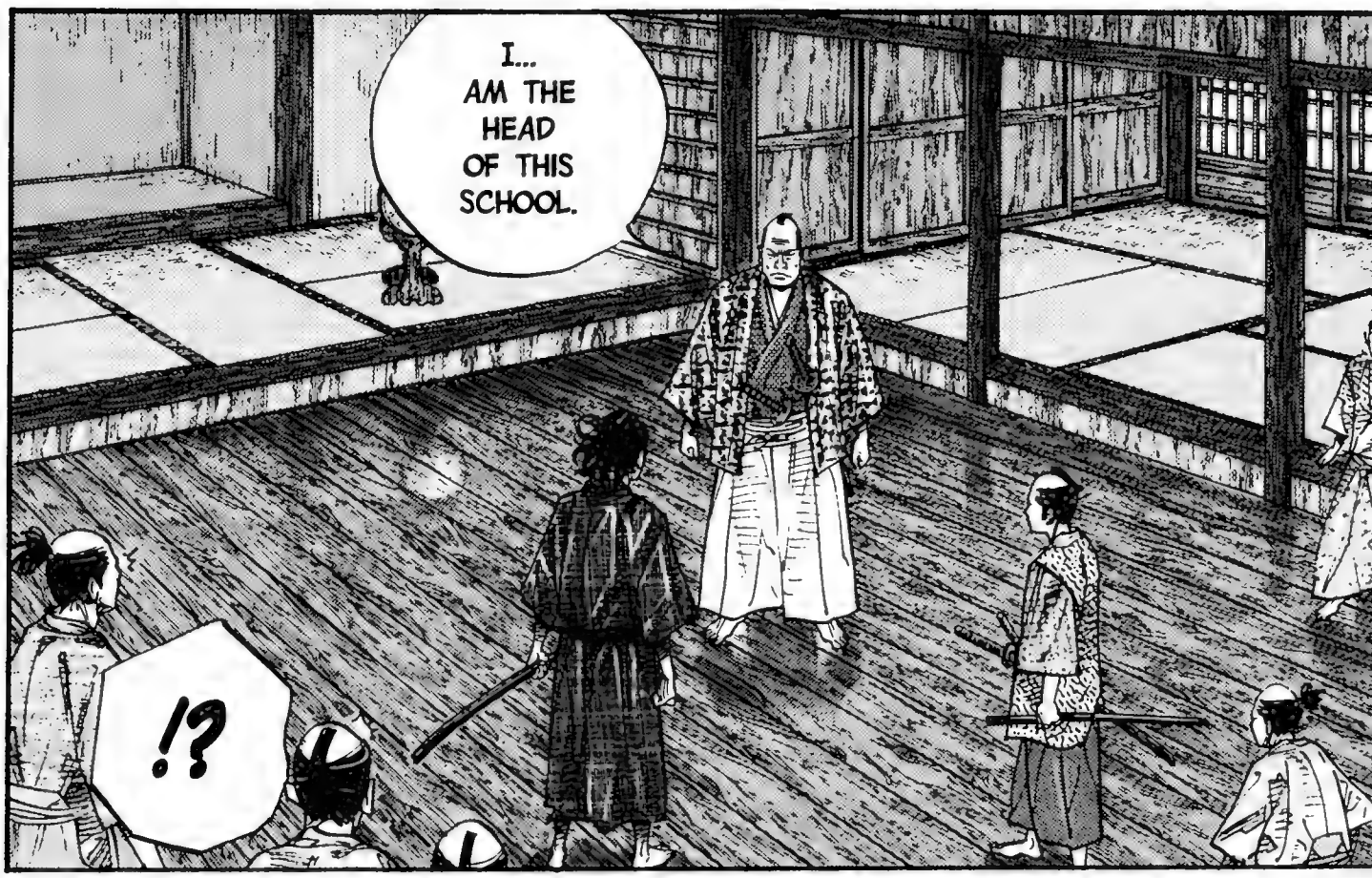

I WON'T ALLOW HIM TO TARNISH THE REPUTATION OF THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL.


...


I'LL KILL HIM, MYSELF.


HE'S SO STUPID!!
HAH!
IGNORANT MONKEY.
...
MIYAMOTO MUSASHI, RONIN FROM SAKUSHŪ...
...REQUESTS TO ENGAGE YOU IN A DUEL.
YOU MUST BE...
...YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ, THE HEAD OF THIS SCHOOL.
SHUF
!?


LEARN SOME MANNERS!
WHAT!?
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE!?
GO BACK TO THE MOUNTAINS!!
MIYA-MOTO...


I... AM THE HEAD OF THIS SCHOOL.
!?

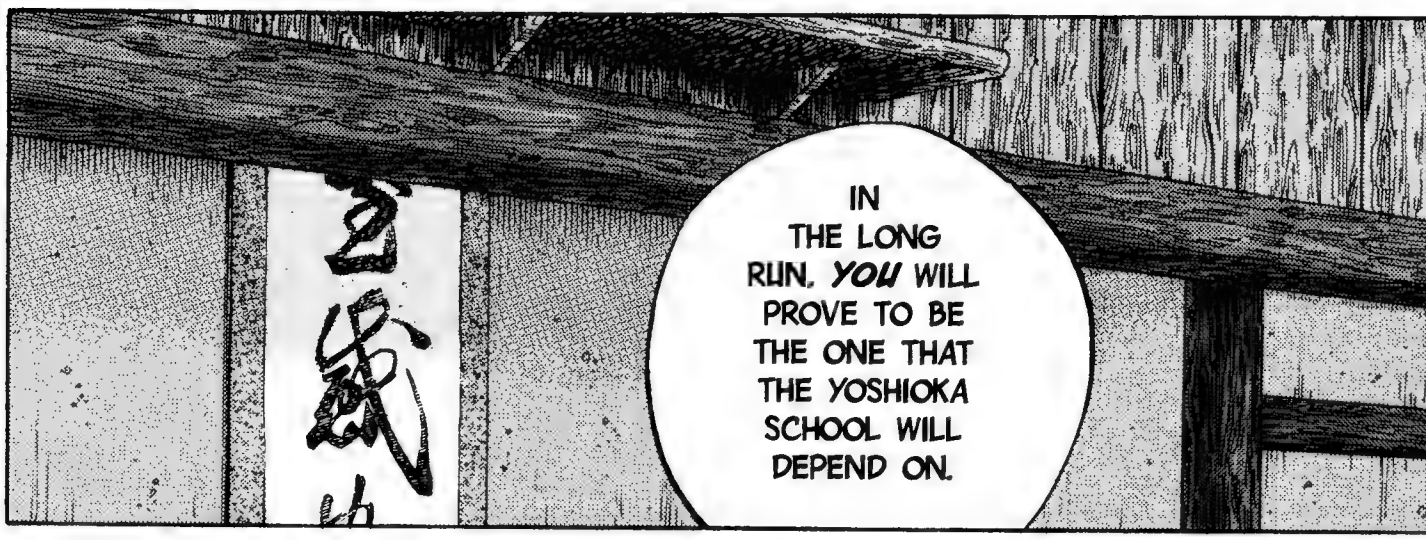

DENSHICHIRO.
I AM YOSHIOKA.
I KNEW IT!
HMPH


I AM THE MASTER...
...OF THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL.


DENSHI-CHIRŌ SENSEI...

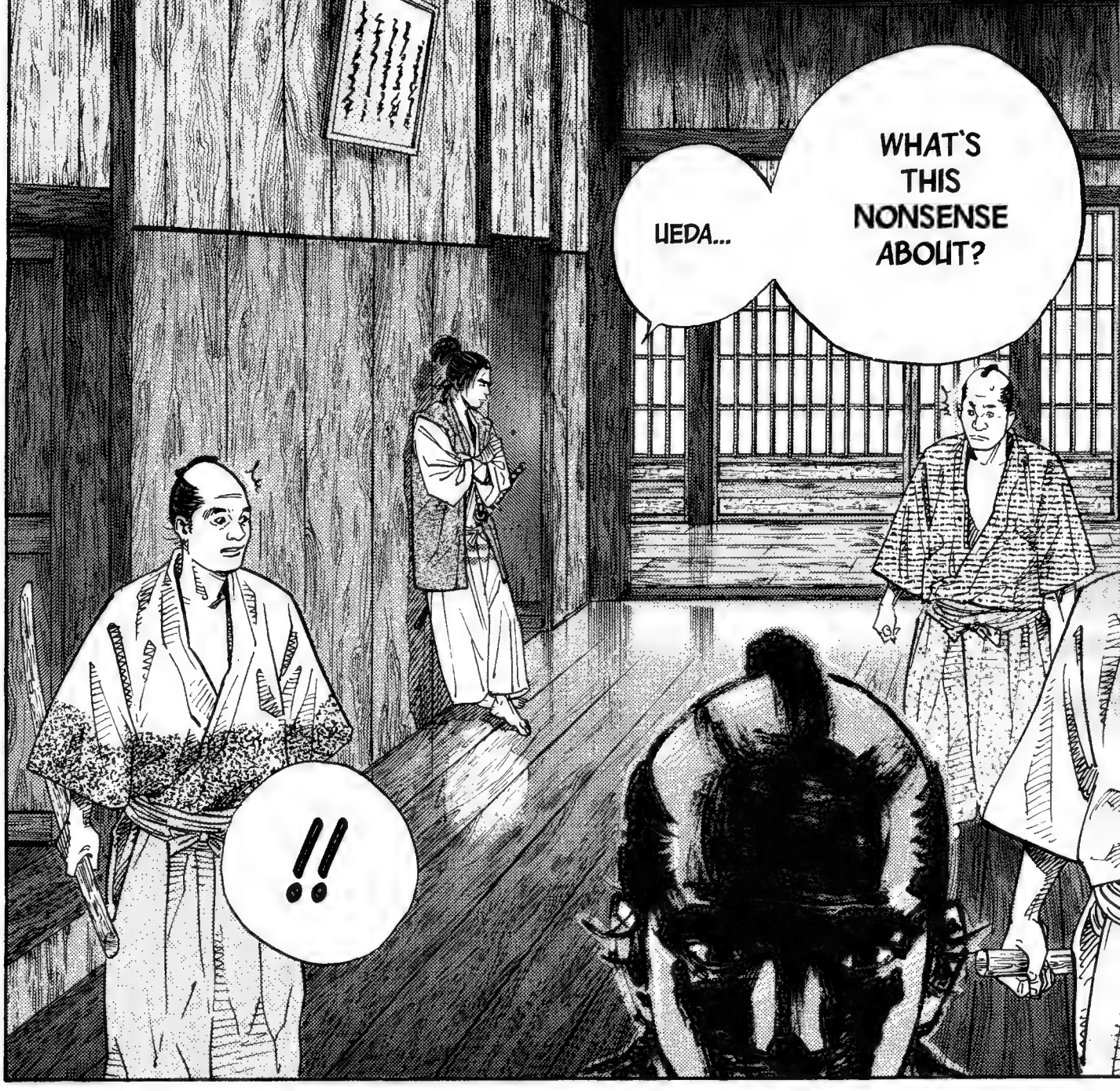

I'LL TAKE ON YOUR CHALLENGE.
SOMEONE GIVE HIM A SWORD.


...
YOU MUST NOT DO THIS.
GET OUT OF MY WAY, UEDA.


IN THE LONG RUN, *YOU* WILL PROVE TO BE THE ONE THAT THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL WILL DEPEND ON.


YOU *ARE* THE MASTER, DENSHICHIRŌ.
...!!


DENSHI-CHIRŌ?
UEDA...
IF YOU WANT HIM DEAD, I'LL KILL HIM.
AND AS THE MASTER OF THE SCHOOL...
...YOU MUST BE SELECTIVE IN WHO YOU FIGHT.

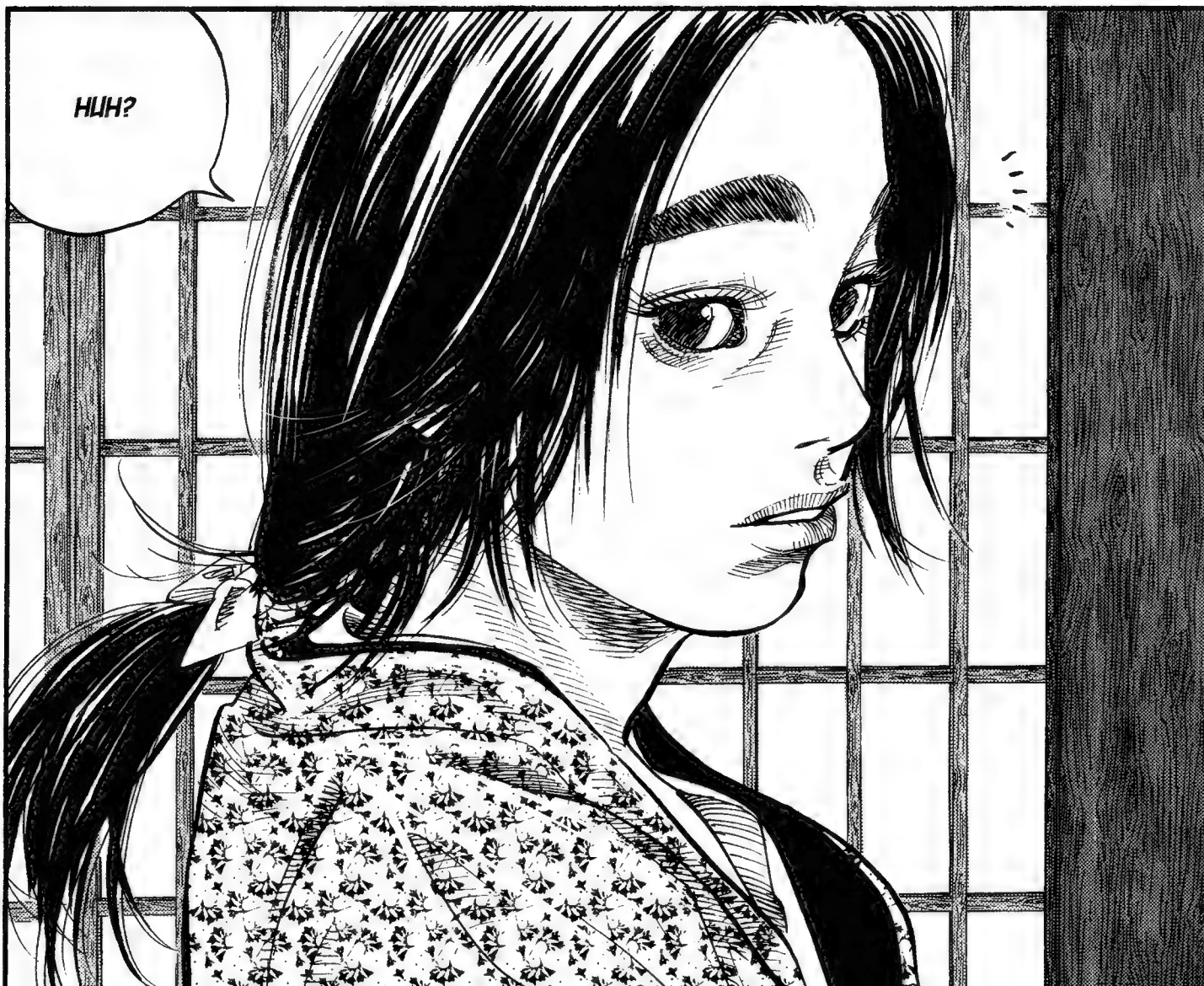

UEDA...
WHAT'S THIS NONSENSE ABOUT?
!!


GION...


SINCE WHEN DOES THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL HAVE TWO MASTERS?


YAWWN...
FWOM
I'M BACK.
SEIJŪRŌ!!
...


IT'S
YOU!


HUH?


Vagabond

(I ALWAYS ALMOST FORGET TO DRAW THE FRECKLES.)




HEY...
YOU'RE...



#26 The Master


YOU'RE...
...YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ!?
YOU'RE THE HEAD OF THIS SCHOOL!?
IF IT ISN'T THE SAMURAI IN TRAINING.


SO YOU CAME AFTER ALL...
EVEN AFTER I WARNED YOU NOT TO.

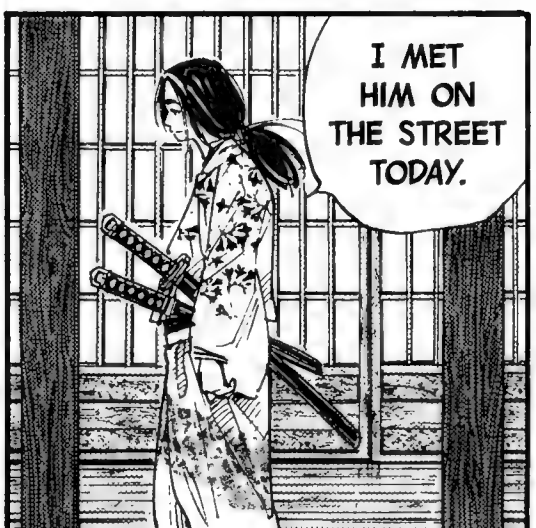


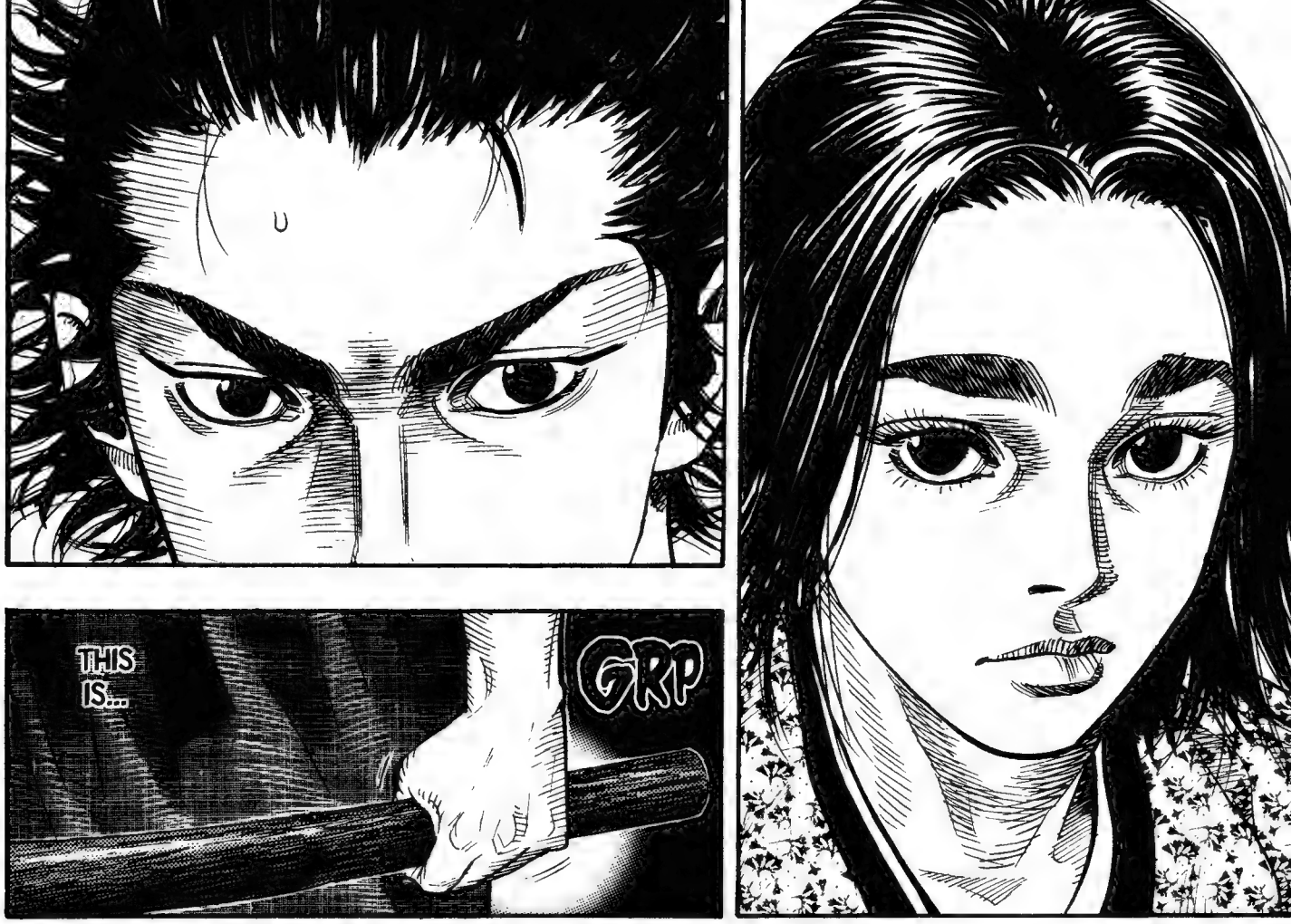

THUMP-THMP


...YOU KNOW THIS MAN?
SEIJŪRŌ ...

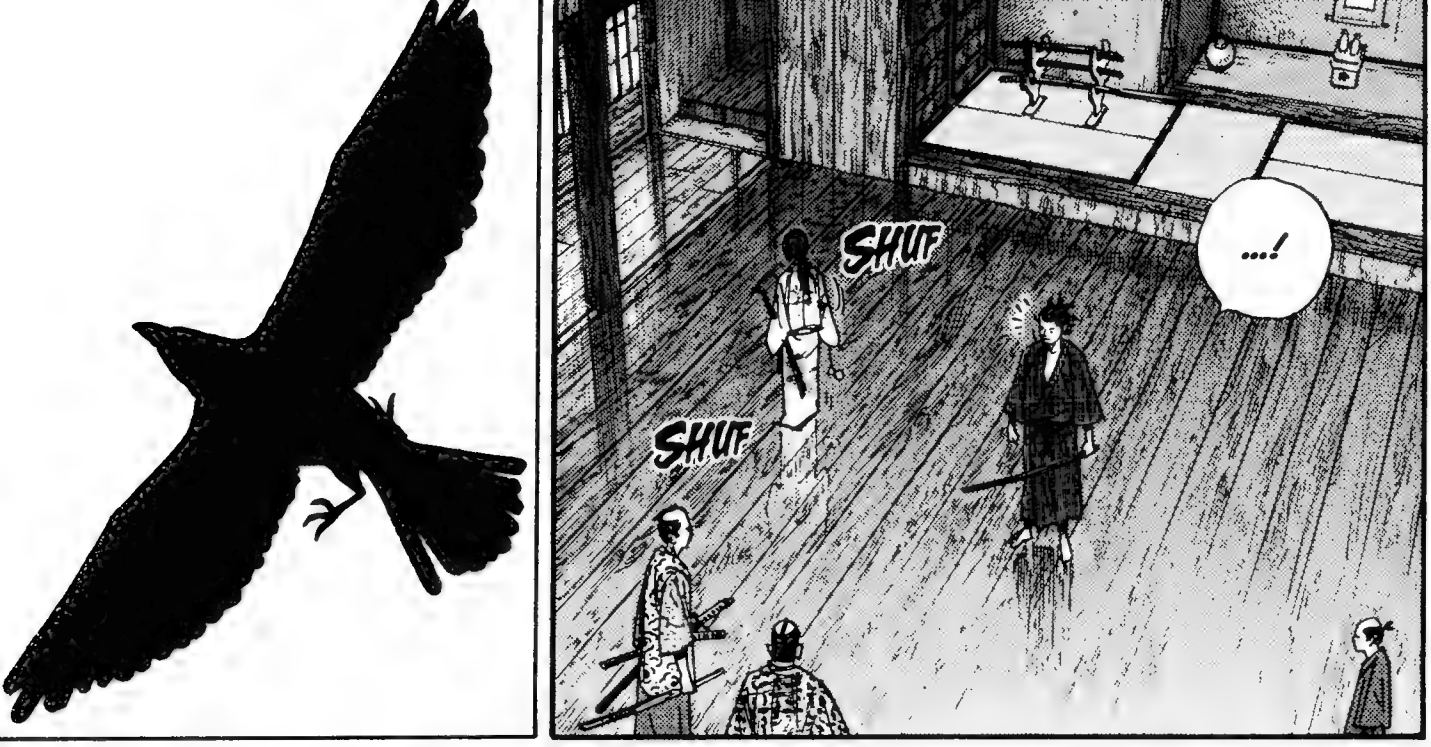

THUMP-THMP


YOU SEE, YOU'RE DEAD.


I MET HIM ON THE STREET TODAY.


THIS IS...
GRP

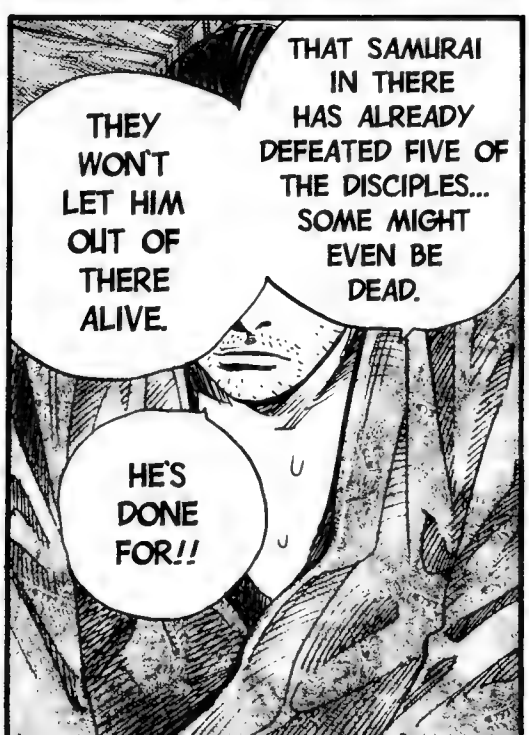

YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ!?


SHUF
SHUF
...!

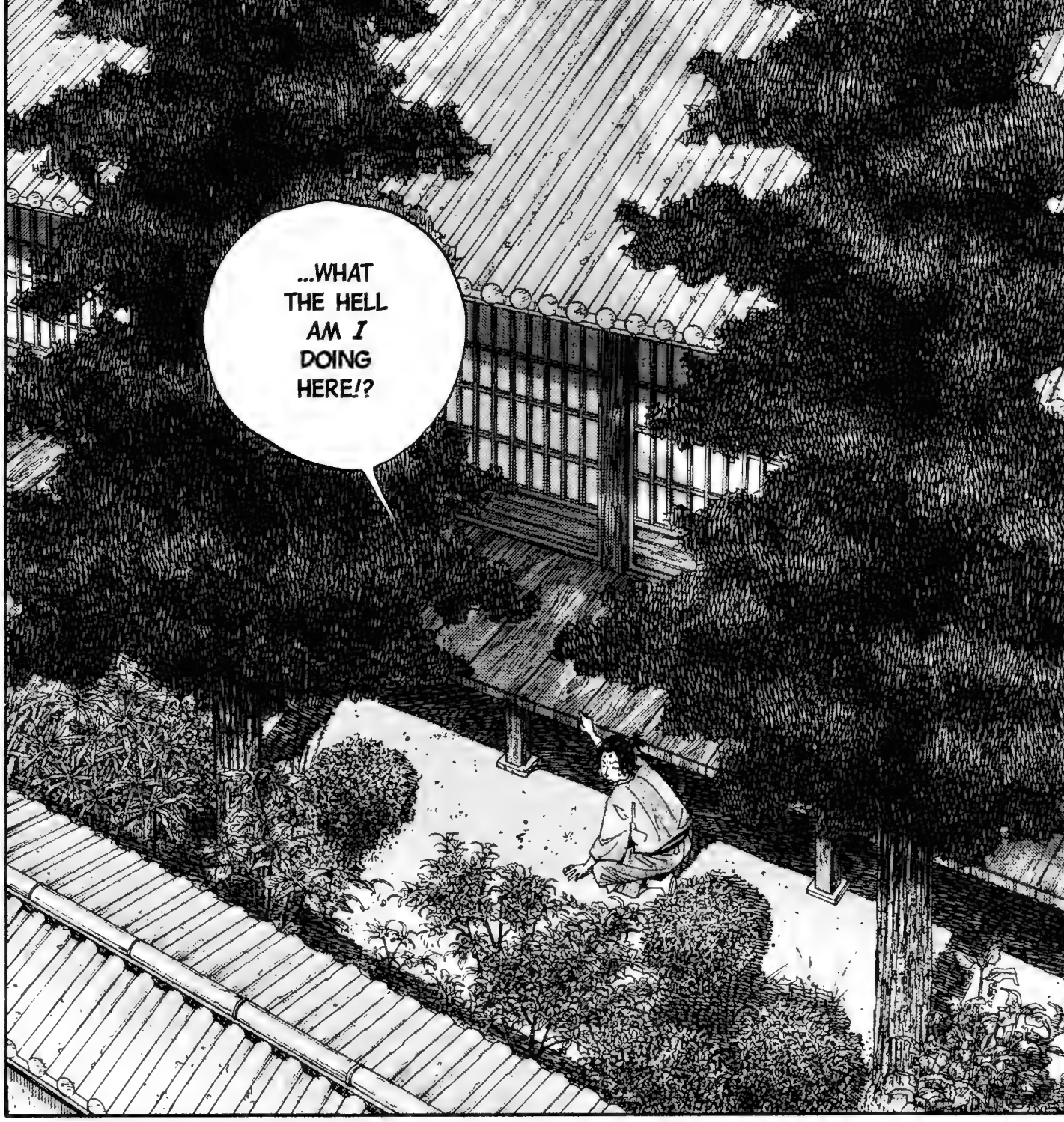



IT'S ALL OVER...
GULP


BUT...


THEY WON'T LET HIM OUT OF THERE ALIVE.
THAT SAMURAI IN THERE HAS ALREADY DEFEATED FIVE OF THE DISCIPLES... SOME MIGHT EVEN BE DEAD.
HE'S DONE FOR!!


FIRST DENSHICHIRŌ CAME BACK, AND NOW SEIJŪRŌ AND TŌJI HAVE RETURNED, TOO!!


...WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING HERE!?


I'LL BE KILLED IF THEY FIND ME!!
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
I HAVE TO GET HOME!!


I'M NOT GOING BACK THERE!!
THERE'S NO WAY!!
...
BUT WHAT "HOME" DO I HAVE TO GO BACK TO?
SPECIAL SAKE FROM NADA.
PLISH
IT'S REALLY GOOD.

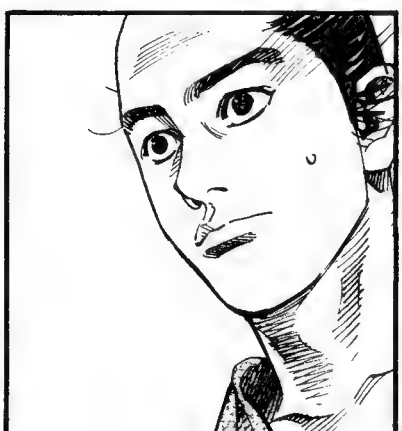

!
TAKE IT AND GO HOME.


!!

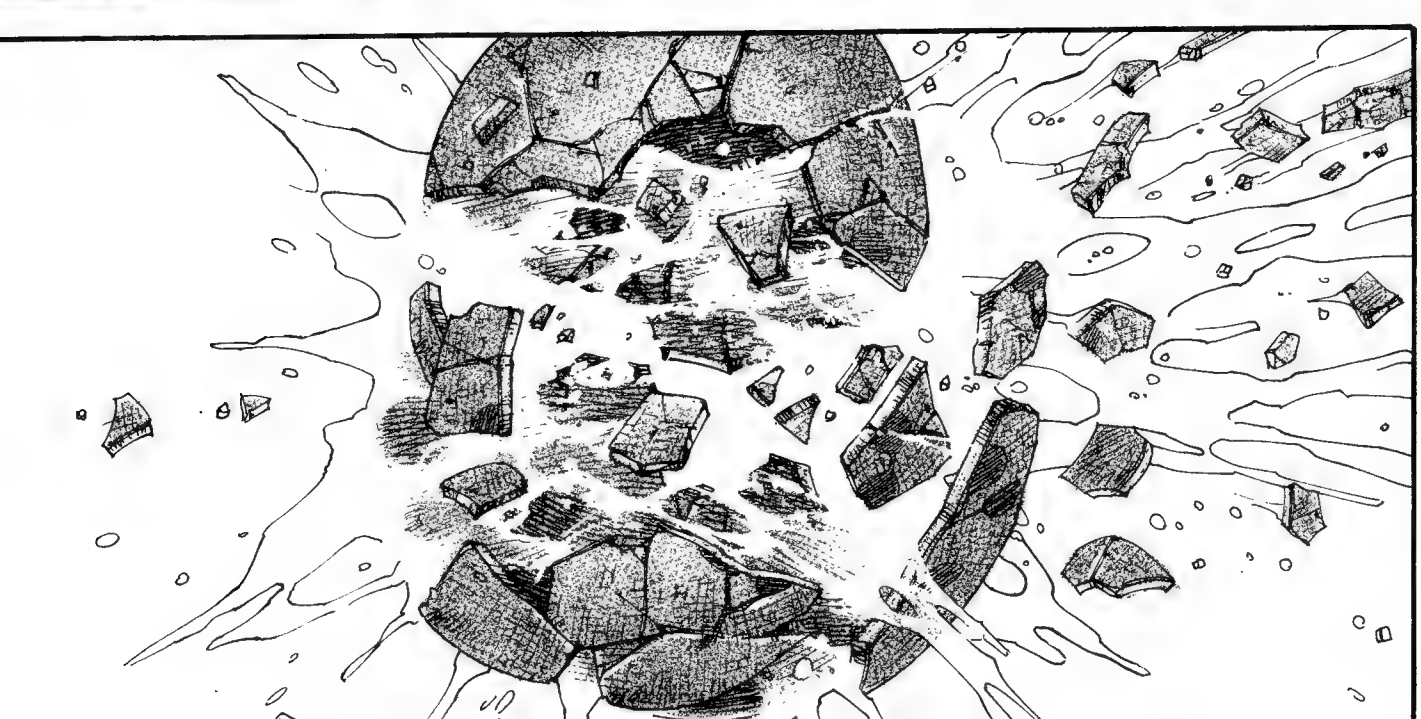

!!


SEIJURO!!
KRNCH

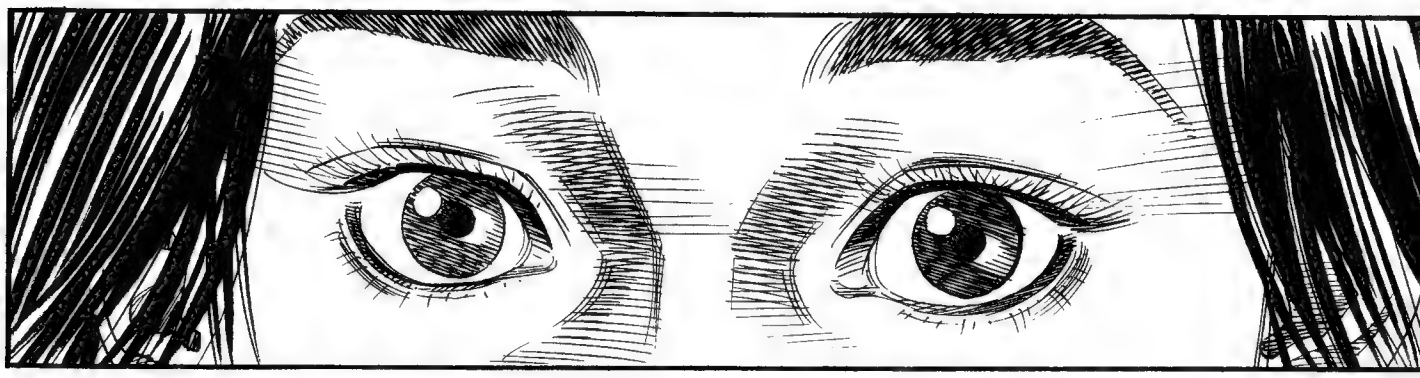









I'M A HICK FROM THE COUNTRY...
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO APPRECIATE GOOD SAKE.

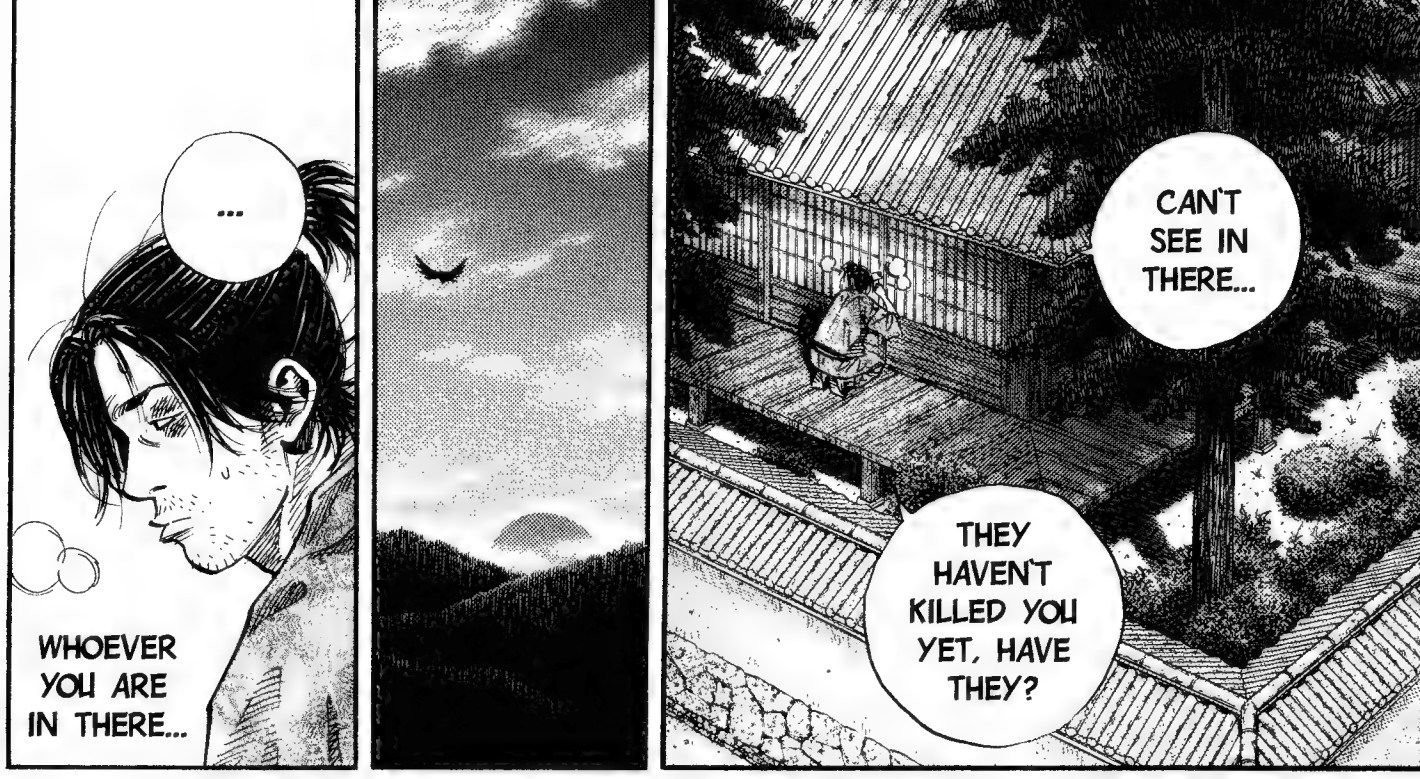



YOU EXPECT ME TO GO HOME WITH A CONSOLATION PRIZE...
...WHEN THE RENOWNED YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME?
HMPH
...
GASP!
ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND, MIYAMOTO?


YOU'RE SHAKING.
WHO IS THIS GUY?
!
HA HA HA!!
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE JUST ALL TALK!
...
TWITCH
TWITCH
TWITCH
CAN'T STOP SHAKING.
BRRR
BRRR
MASTER SEIJŪRŌ.


I'M GOING TO FIGHT YOU WITH EVERYTHING I HAVE. ARE YOU WILLING TO DO THE SAME?


WHOEVER YOU ARE IN THERE, I MUST GIVE YOU MY THANKS.
IT GIVES ME COURAGE.
YOU'RE TRYING TO TAKE ON THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL ALL BY YOURSELF...
I'M COMPLETELY MOVED.
THANK YOU.
I WENT OFF TO SEKIGAHARA WITH A SINGLE SPEAR IN HAND. I HAD GREAT HOPES AND DREAMS.
YOU'VE HELPED ME REMEMBER WHAT I USED TO BE LIKE.
I *WILL* MAKE A NAME FOR MYSELF!!
I *CAN* BECOME STRONGER.
IT'S *NOT* TOO LATE FOR ME.

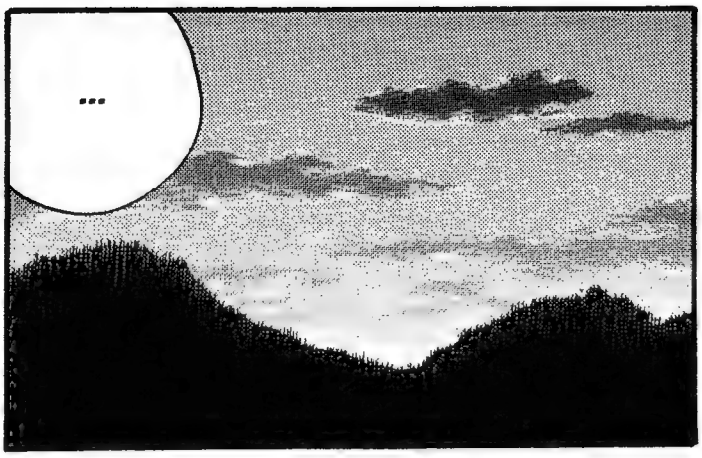

...
WHOEVER YOU ARE IN THERE...
CAN'T SEE IN THERE...
THEY HAVEN'T KILLED YOU YET, HAVE THEY?


I-I'M NO GOOD...
I RAN OFF AND ABANDONED MY BEST FRIEND...


I JUST FROZE...
I DIDN'T HAVE A SWORD SO...
...SO I...
AND I...
HE WENT IN ALL ALONE TO FIGHT SEVERAL DOZENS OF BANDITS.
JUST LIKE YOU'RE DOING RIGHT NOW.


I LOST MY HEAD...


I HAVE TO...
...RISE ABOVE MYSELF!!

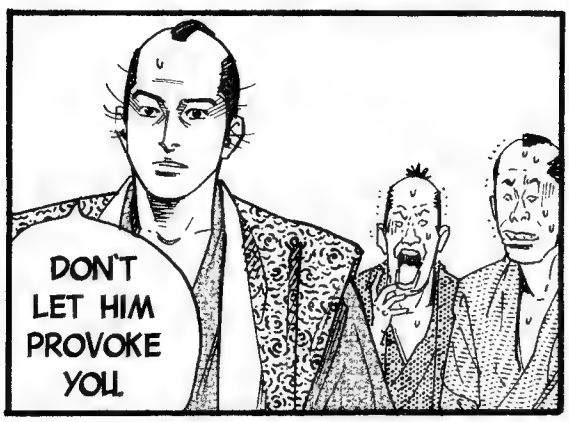

...


I LET MY FRIEND DIE AND I SURVIVED...
AND NOW, I HAVE SUCH AN EMPTY LIFE.
I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE ...!!


THOK
FWOOSH
HOW DARE YOU!?


AH, WHAT A WASTE. SUCH GOOD SAKE.
SOME-ONE CLEAN THIS MESS UP.
DENSHI-CHIRŌ, STOP...
KRICH
HEY!!
THE HEAD OF THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL MUSTN'T BE SO SOFT!!


THAT'S THE YOSHIOKA WAY.
I'LL FINISH THIS MOUNTAIN MONKEY OFF IN A SINGLE BLOW!! THERE'LL BE NOTHING LEFT OF HIM.
?


DON'T LET HIM PROVOKE YOU.


YOU'RE NOT CLAIMING THAT YOU'RE STRONGER THAN THE MASTER OF THE SCHOOL, ARE YOU?
!!


!!


SO THE "FAKE" MASTER WANTS TO TAKE ME ON?
YOU TRICKED ME.


TUP
TUP
...
THIS MIYAMOTO MUSASHI IS A DEAD MAN.
DENSHI-CHIRŌ'S ALL RILED UP.
I'LL SPLIT YOUR HEAD RIGHT HERE.
DIE!!

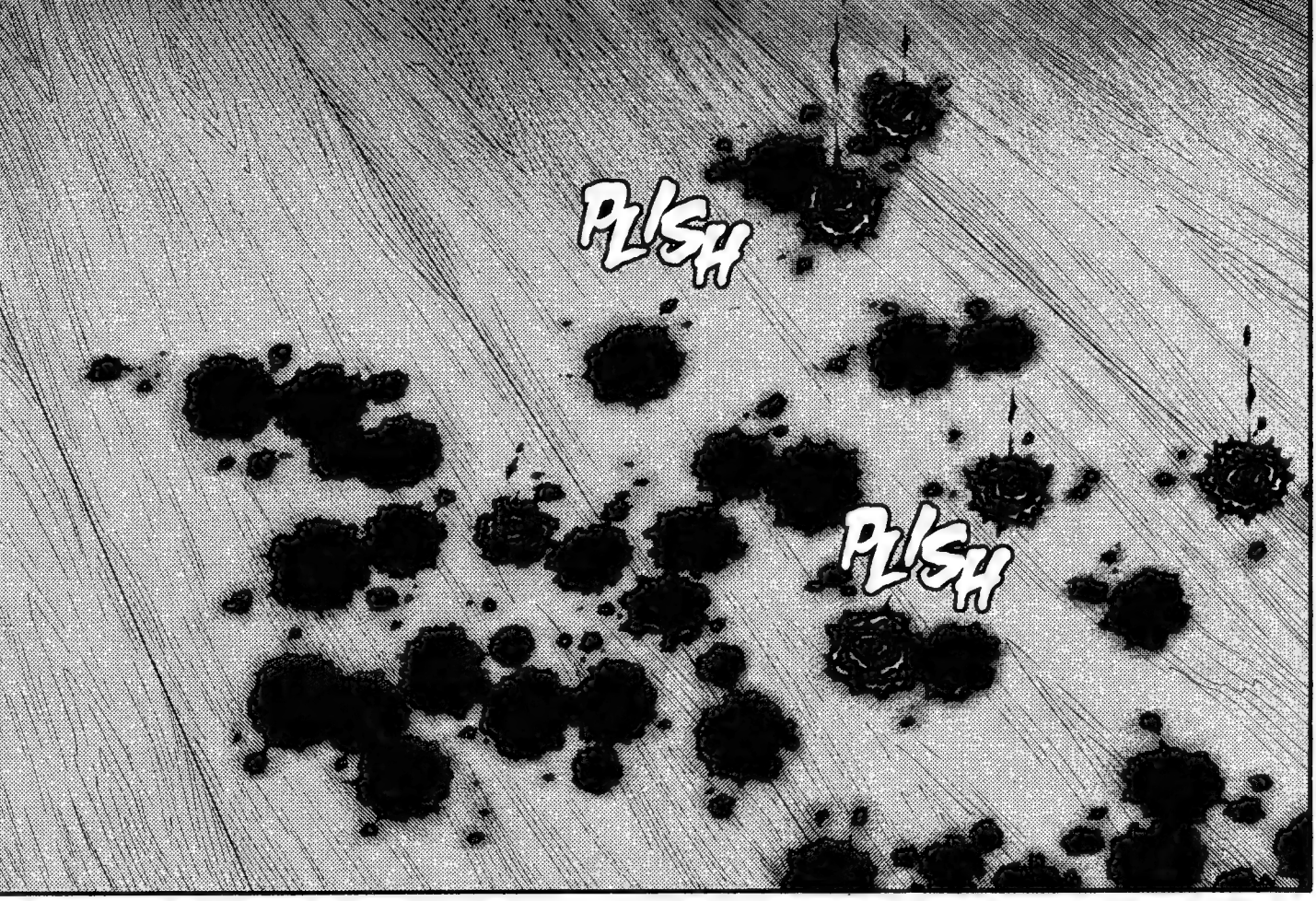



SLASH


Vagabond



(I HAVEN"T HAD MUCH
EXPERIENCE DRAWING
FEET UNTIL NOW...)


PLISH
PLISH











#27 Instinct




WHAT A QUICK DRAW.

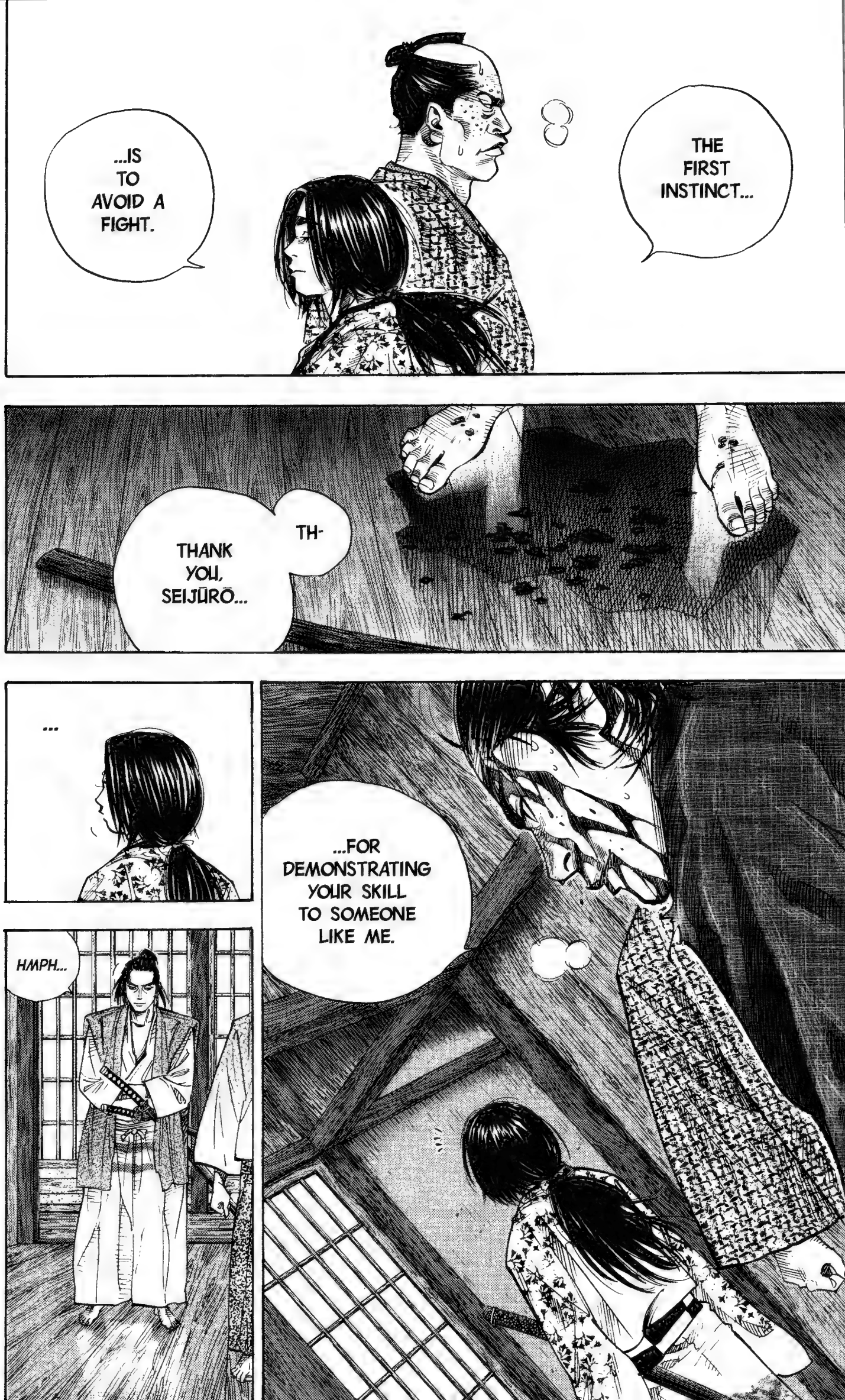



SO THIS IS YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ!!

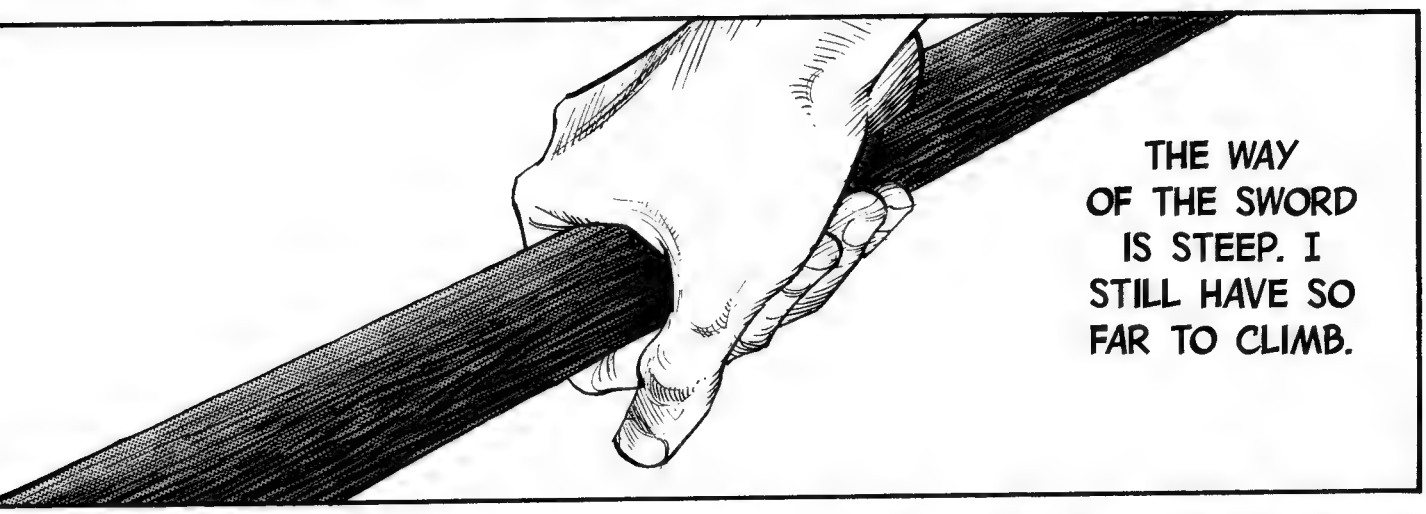

HIS ARM REACHED OUT LIKE A GIANT SNAKE...


WHEN A BEAST ENCOUNTERS AN ENEMY, IT LOOKS FEROCIOUS ...
...AND LETS OUT AN ANGRY ROAR.
DO YOU KNOW WHY?


...
THE ENEMY MIGHT RETREAT...
...AND THAT WAY THE BEAST CAN AVOID A FIGHT.


...IS TO AVOID A FIGHT.
THE FIRST INSTINCT...
THANK YOU, SEIJŪRŌ...
TH-
...
...FOR DEMONSTRATING YOUR SKILL TO SOMEONE LIKE ME.
HMPH...


...
YOU SEE HOW RECKLESS YOU ARE? NOW GET OUT OF HERE.
THAT IS, IF *THEY* LET YOU OUT OF HERE ALIVE.


THE WAY OF THE SWORD IS STEEP. I STILL HAVE SO FAR TO CLIMB.

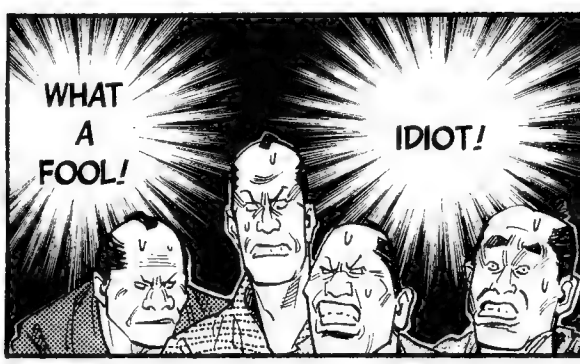

BUT THAT MAKES MY GOAL ALL THE MORE WORTHWHILE.

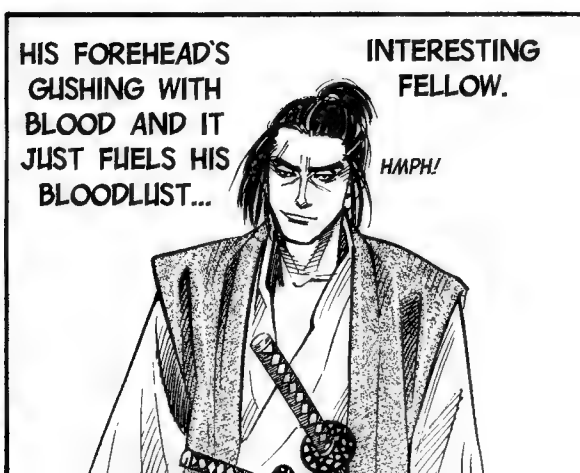

MY REQUEST TO CHALLENGE YOU STILL STANDS.
HUF
HUF
AND THAT'S WHY I MUST FACE YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ!!


!!


...

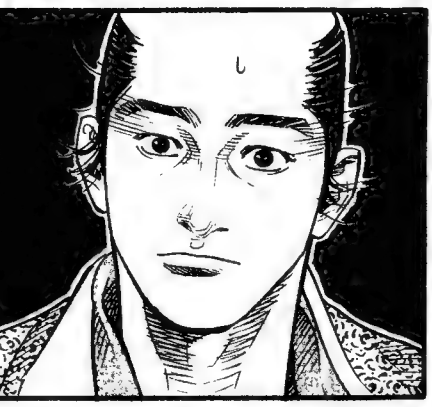

MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...
SOMETIMES PERSISTENCE WILL GET YOU NO-WHERE.


WHAT A FOOL!
IDIOT!

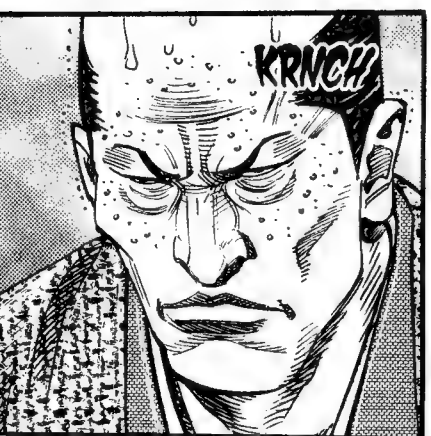

HIS FOREHEAD'S GUSHING WITH BLOOD AND IT JUST FUELS HIS BLOODLUST...
INTERESTING FELLOW.
HMPH!


I CAN'T DO THAT.
DIDN'T YOU?
YOU ASKED ME IF I WAS WILLING TO TAKE YOU ON WITH EVERYTHING I HAVE...


WHAT?






KRNCH


I'M NOT INTERESTED IN FIGHTING YOU...


KRNCH
WHAT'S THIS NONSENSE ...!?
I ACCEPT MY DUTY AS HIS OLDEST SON, BUT...
...I CAN'T CHANGE MY PERSONALITY.
I HAVE TO FOLLOW MY INSTINCTS.
YOSHIOKA KEMPŌ WAS THE MILITARY INSTRUCTOR TO THE SHOGUNATE FAMILY.


AND SO...
...I AM GOING OUT AGAIN...
...TO THE PLEASURE QUARTERS.
FAREWELL !!
!!
!?
WHAT !?


第七話

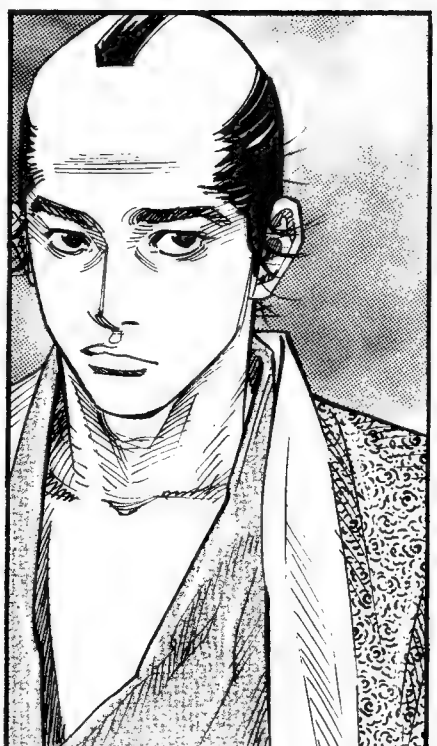

...
HE GOT AWAY...!!
WATCH THAT SELF-CONCEIT, GION!!
SO I'M GOING WITH HIM.
HE'S THE ONLY ONE WITH MORE SKILL THAN ME.
OH WELL...
BUT...
HMPH...


YOU'RE AN INTER-ESTING FELLOW.
MIYAMOTO MUSASHI, HUH?


GION TŌJI...
WHAT AN ARROGANT GUY...


IF YOU MANAGE TO GET OUT OF HERE ALIVE...
I, GION TŌJI, WILL TAKE YOU ON.


FP
FP
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THE ODDS ARE AGAINST YOU.






HELL, HE COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE OFF!!
TWO OF THE STRONGEST IN THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL HAVE LEFT.
AS WELL AS ALL THE OTHER DISCIPLES.
UEDA RYŌHEI.
THE MIGHTY YOSHIOKA DENSHICHIRŌ AND...
BUT THERE ARE TWO LEFT...!!
IF I'M GOING TO HELP HIM I HAVE TO DO IT NOW!!
GULP!
AND, I CAN'T SEE IN THERE TOO WELL, BUT...
...HIS FACE SEEMS TO BE COVERED WITH BLOOD.


FWIK
FWIK
WHICH WAY TO THE PLEASURE QUARTERS?
!!


YOU LOST!!
ARE YOU A FOOL!?
YOU'RE DRENCHED IN BLOOD!!
DON'T YOU GET IT!?
!?
YOU'RE GOING AFTER THEM!?
I STILL HAVEN'T SHOWN HIM MY SKILL.
I WANT TO EXCHANGE BLOWS WITH HIM.


HE'S THE STRONGEST SWORDSMAN IN KYOTO...
YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ...
THERE'S NO REASON FOR ME TO FIGHT ANYONE ELSE.




ZHOOP
JUST PASSED AWAY...
TAKASHINA...


THUP
DON'T YOU SEE...?
WE STILL WANT TO FIGHT YOU!!


...!!
THE COUNT NOW STANDS AT FIVE...
FIVE OF OUR OWN ARE DEAD.


...


...TO KILL YOU!!
AND WE HAVE FIVE VERY GOOD REASONS...
THUMP


Vagabond

(FLICKER FLICKER)






SENSEI...
!!


DENSHICHIRŌ
...
I WON'T BE SATISFIED UNTIL I KILL YOU FIVE TIMES OVER.
RUBB
SO TAKASHINA IS DEAD...
WHO ELSE?
CHIHARA ...
...AND NIMURA.
HASUZAWA ...
...AND KAJI.
...
I'M NOT LIKE MY BROTHER ...
I CAN'T JUST LAUGH IT OFF AFTER FIVE OF MY MEN HAVE BEEN KILLED.



#28 Demon II


FWIP
MASTER!!
SENSEI!!
DENSHICHIRŌ SENSEI!!
SO I HAVE TO FIGHT YOU TO GET OUT OF HERE?
THAT'S RIGHT.


SOMEONE GIVE HIM A SWORD.
...
GASP!
HE'S IN TROUBLE.

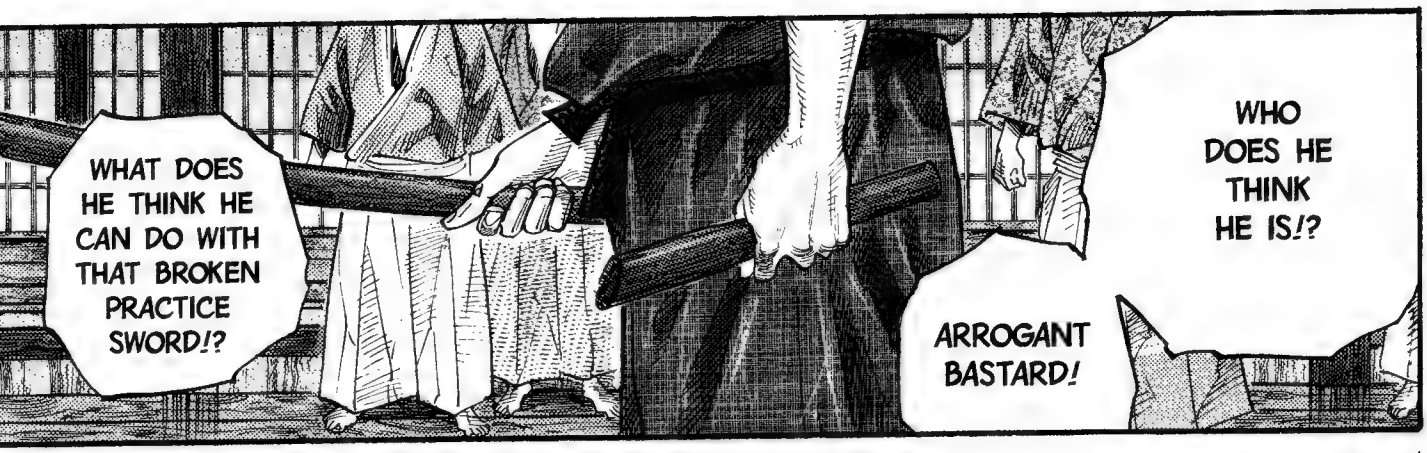

BUT WHAT CAN I DO!?
...
THAT SAMURAI MIGHT BE STRONG, BUT YOU'D HAVE TO BE CRAZY TO CHALLENGE DENSHICHIRŌ!
I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING BEFORE HE GETS KILLED.
I HAVE TO ACT NOW!!
...
HUF
HUF
HUF
FWISH
ULP!
TWITCH
TWITCH
SOMEONE GIVE HIM A SWORD!!
DENSHICHIRŌ SENSEI!
WE DON'T BELIEVE HE DESERVES THE FORMALITIES OF AN OFFICIAL CHALLENGE...
HE JUST--


HE JUST DESERVES TO DIE!!


THAT'S FINE WITH ME.
TUGG
...
HMM...


I'M
READY.


HUH!?
...!?


WHAT DOES HE THINK HE CAN DO WITH THAT BROKEN PRACTICE SWORD!?
WHO DOES HE THINK HE IS!?
ARROGANT BASTARD!


OKAY...
THUMP
THMP
...HERE I GO!!


...

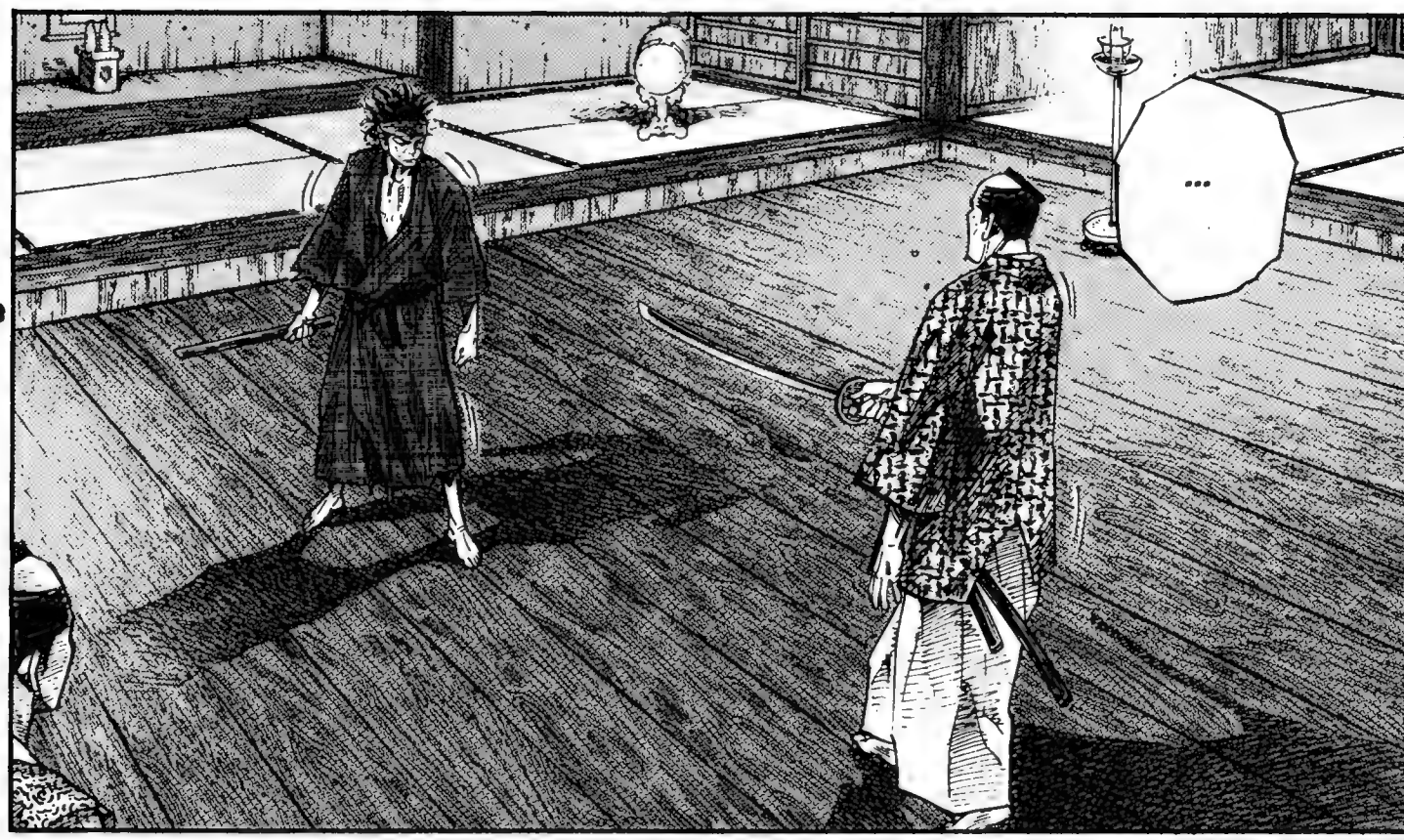

WHAT CAN YOU DO...
IS THIS SOME KIND OF BLUFF?
...WITH THOSE PIECES OF WOOD?


THUMP
THMP
THUMP
THMP
THUMP
THMP
THUMP
THMP
NOW'S YOUR CHANCE!! GET OUT OF HERE!
THUMP
THMP
THAT'S WHAT I'LL DO!
OKAY!!
THUMP
THMP


HERE I GO!!
I'M GOING!!
I'M GOING TO REDEEM MYSELF!!
ONE!!
TWO!!
THUMP THMP
THUMP THMP
!
HUH!?


THWUNK
!!
KLAK
!!


SENSEI!!
DENSHICHIRŌ SENSEI!!


...


VERY CLEVER.
THAT WAS CLEVER...


HM...


HMPH.
FWOM
FWOM
NO BROKEN BONES.
TUGG
I GUESS THIS IS TOO SHORT TO DO ANY REAL DAMAGE.
KLOP
FIP


THE NEXT BLOW WILL BE YOUR DEATH.


FWISH
THIS GUY MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO IT...
HE JUST MIGHT DEFEAT DENSHI-CHIRŌ....
GASP!
MAYBE I SHOULDN'T GET IN THE WAY...
KLANK


...!!
SLICK
GASP!
AMAZING!!
HE'S A DEMON!!
DEMON...

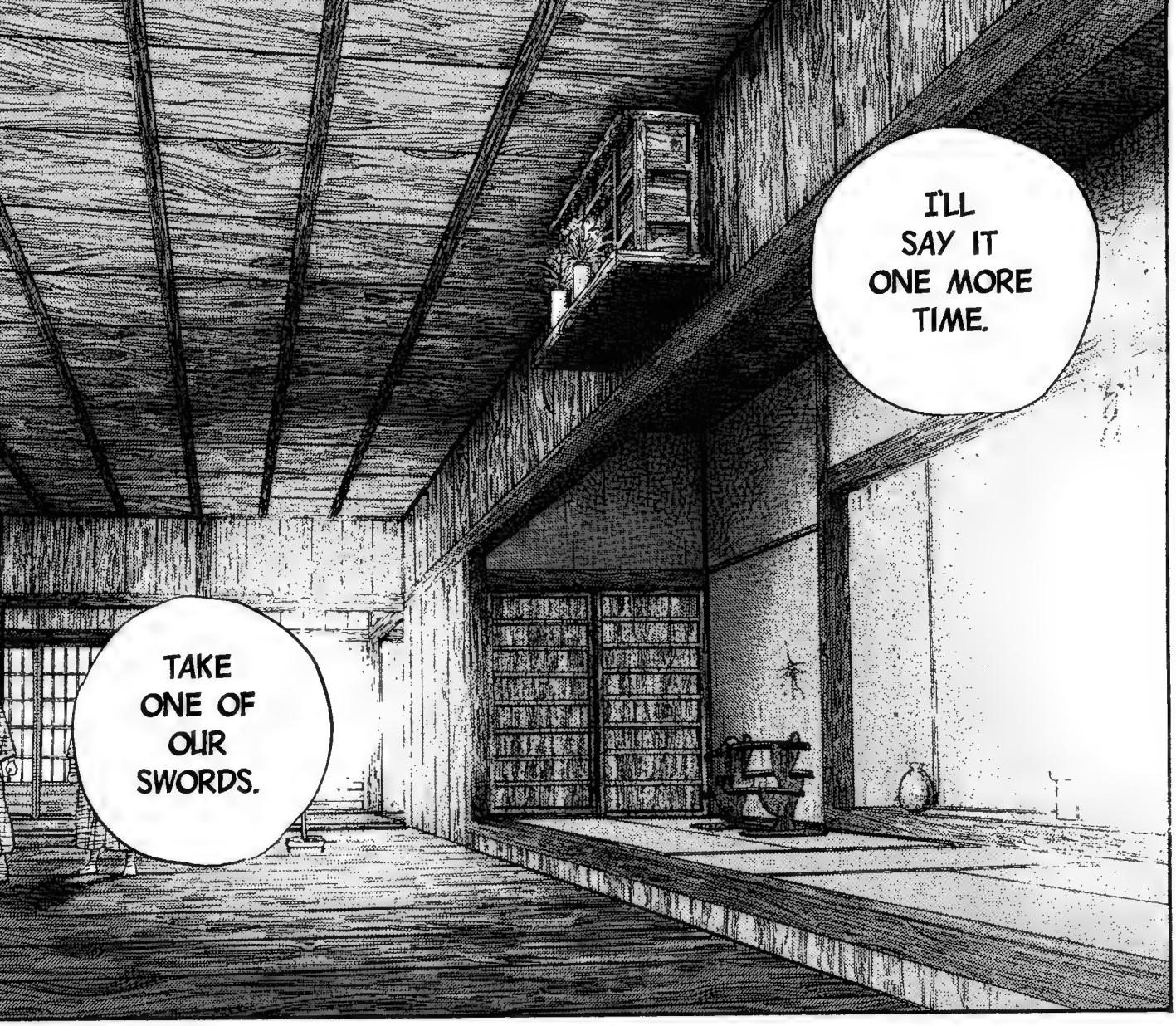

HUF
HUF
HUF
CALLING ME A DEMON IS A COMPLIMENT...
COMING TO KYOTO...
YOSHIOKA KEMPŌ!! YAGYŪ SEKISHŪSAI!!
IT WAS BECAUSE OF THEIR *STRENGTH* THAT THEY DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES.
...I'LL BECOME THE MIGHTIEST OF FIGHTERS.
IF I DEDICATE MYSELF TO THE WAY OF THE SWORD...
I'VE FINALLY FOUND MY WAY!


THWAK
SENSEI!!
...!!
WHAT'S THAT SMILE?
WHAT MAKES YOU SO CONFIDENT, YOU ARROGANT LITTLE BASTARD?

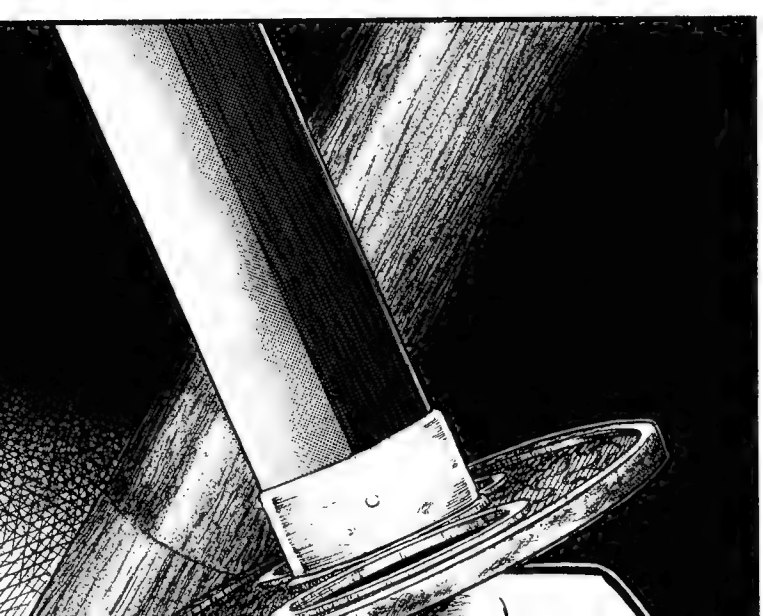

Vagabond



(VISUALIZATION TRAINING)


I'LL SAY IT ONE MORE TIME.
TAKE ONE OF OUR SWORDS.


I SEE.

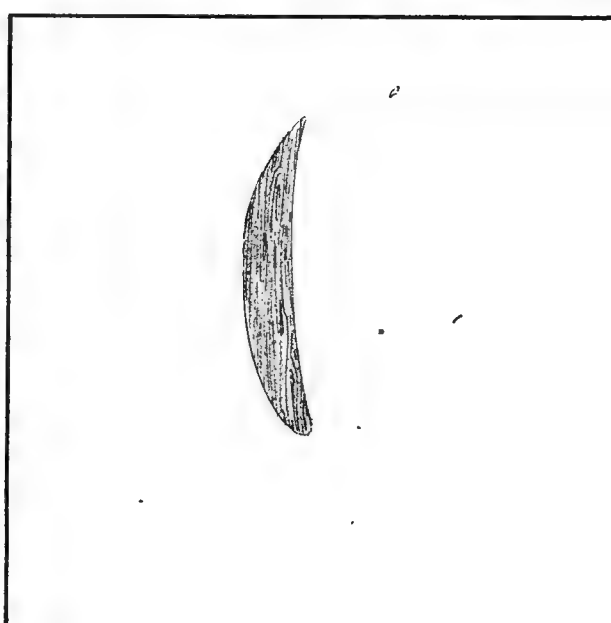



I DON'T NEED IT.


FSH
FWOOSH
!!








MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...


YOU CAN ONLY BE SO CONFIDENT BECAUSE...

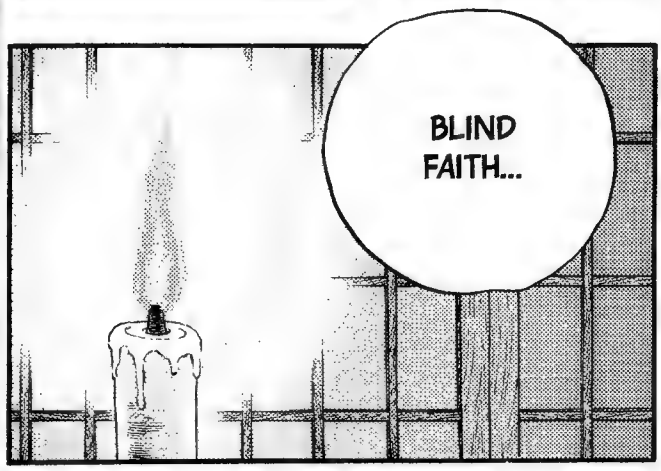

...YOU HAVE NEVER FACED A TRULY STRONG OPPONENT.



#29 | Ignorance


IT'S JUST HOPE WITH NO BASIS IN REALITY...



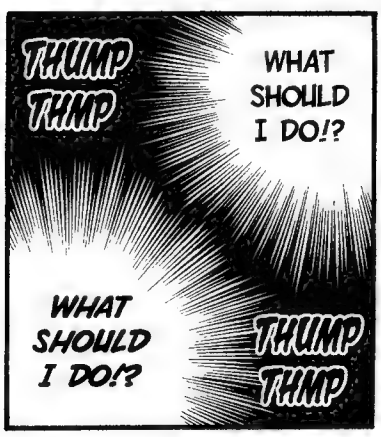

BLIND FAITH...

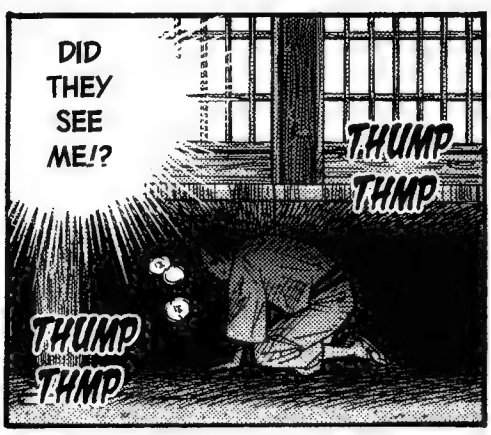

NAIVETY...
CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL...


!!
YOU MIGHT AS WELL KEEP TALKING...
...WHILE YOU STILL CAN.
FWOOSH


FWOOSH
!!
GASP!
FWOOSH
ARRGH!
WHUD

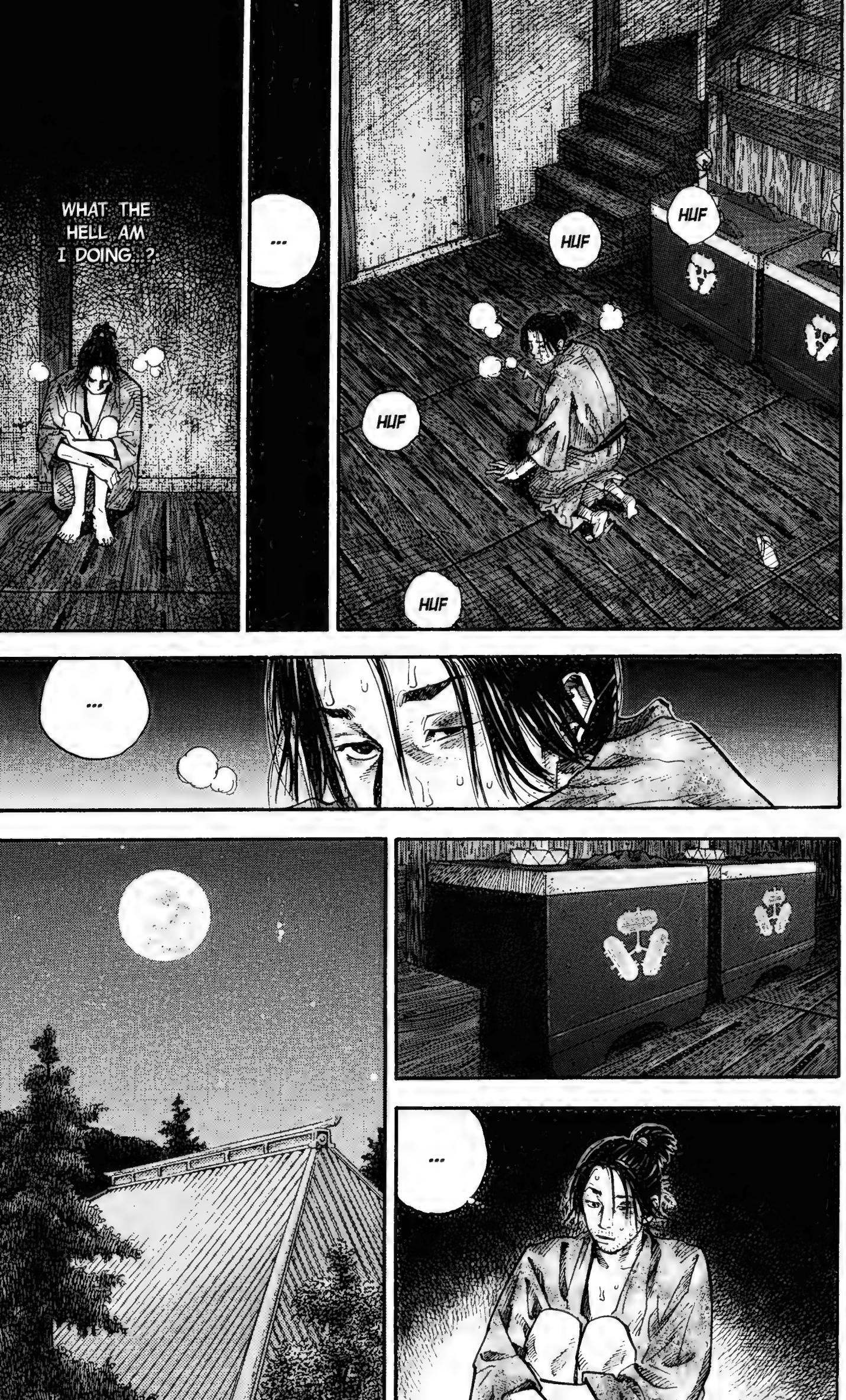

GASP!
!!
THUNK

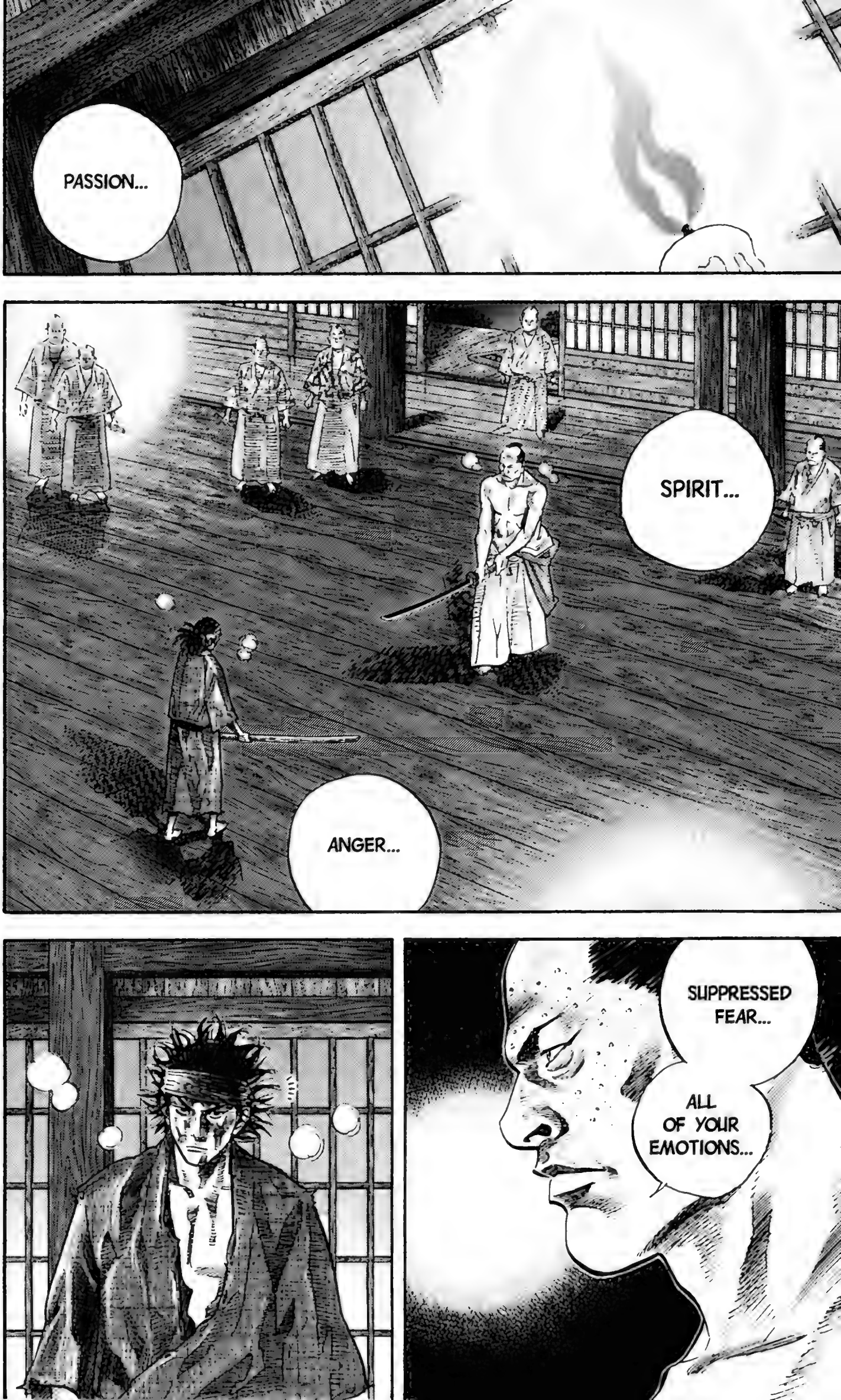

THUMP
THMP
WHAT SHOULD I DO!?
WHAT SHOULD I DO!?
THUMP
THMP


DID THEY SEE ME!?
THUMP
THMP
THUMP
THMP


GASP!!


ESCAPE!!
I DON'T EVEN KNOW THAT SAMURAI!
WHY SHOULD I RISK MY LIFE!?
I'VE GOT NO CONNECTION TO HIM!!


WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING..?
...
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
...
...


PASSION...
SPIRIT...
ANGER...
SUPPRESSED FEAR...
ALL OF YOUR EMOTIONS...


THEY'RE ALL REFLECTED IN YOUR SWORD.
URK


HOW THE HELL CAN THIS HULK DODGE MY SWORD?
...
THE TIP OF YOUR SWORD TREMBLES...
COULD THIS BE PANIC...?
...!!

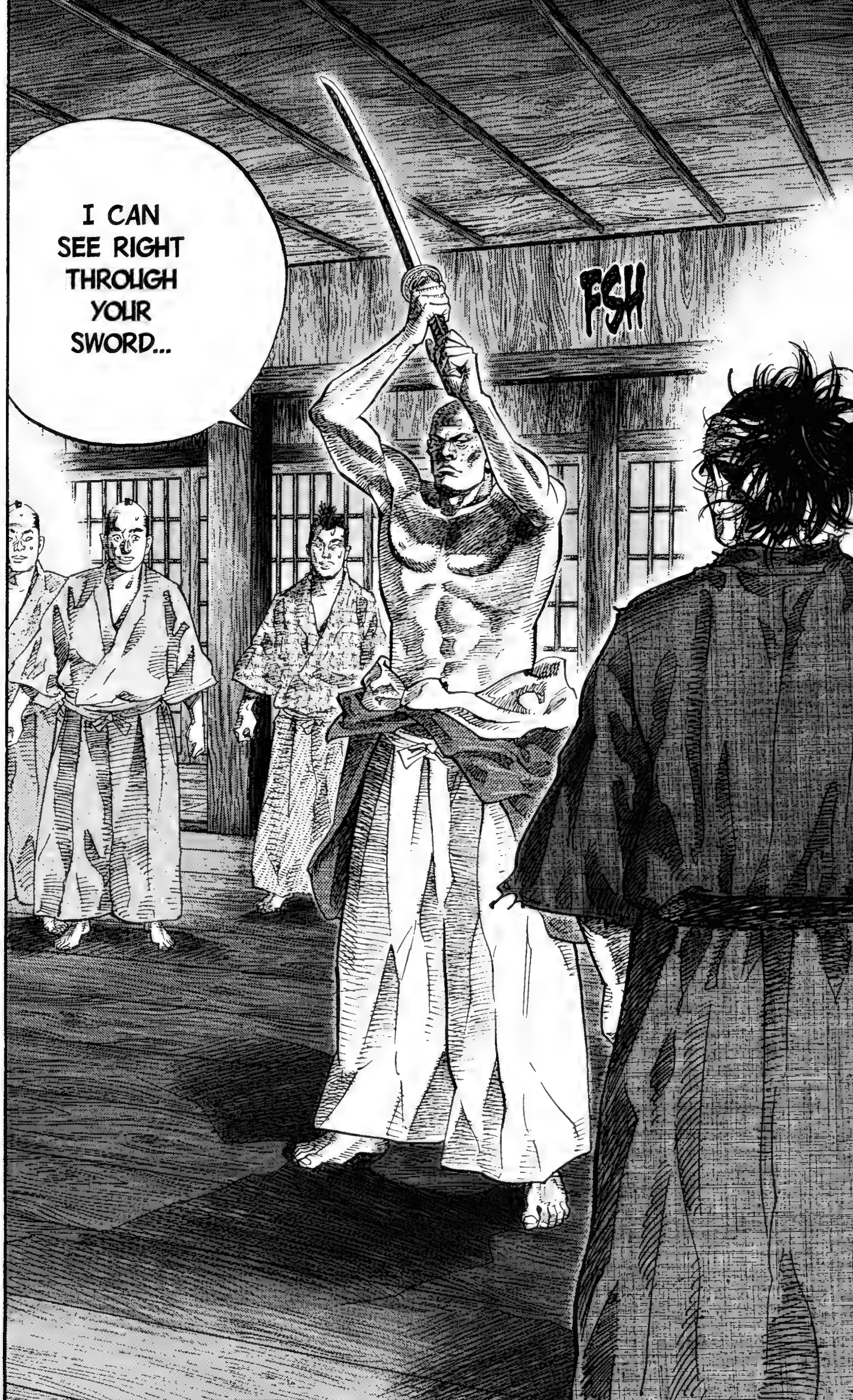

!!
HE'S GOING TO ATTACK.
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? YOU CONCEITED, SPOILED BASTARD!!


TAKUD
!!
SLURP
SLURP
...
SLURP


DELICIOUS!!
THIS IS GREAT SAKE!
SLURP
SLURP
YES!!
GASP!
!!
FWD


I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING... YOU'RE WONDERING...
...HOW SUCH A LARGE MAN CAN DODGE YOUR SWORD...
I'LL TELL YOU HOW...
...
FUP
I WAS ONCE A CHILD, TOO.
EVER SINCE I CAN REMEMBER...


...I'VE HAD TO TAKE ON THE SWORD OF YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ.
MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...


I CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH YOUR SWORD...
FSH






SLISH


Vagabond


(SEIJŪRŌ!)



#30 A Single Stroke




GLUG
GLUG

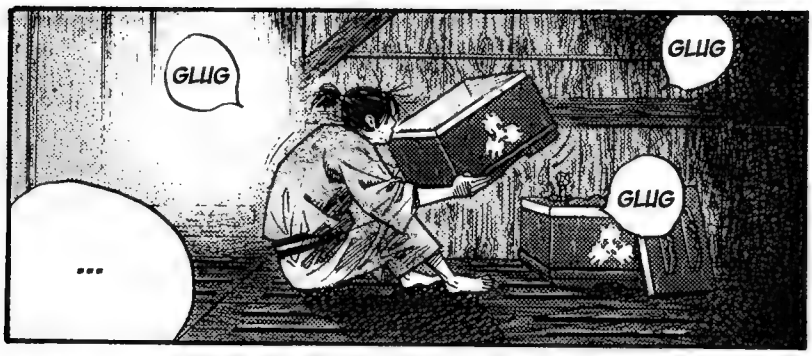

I'M TAKING ON THE YOSHIOKA, TOO!
I'M GONNA DRINK UP ALL THEIR SAKE!!

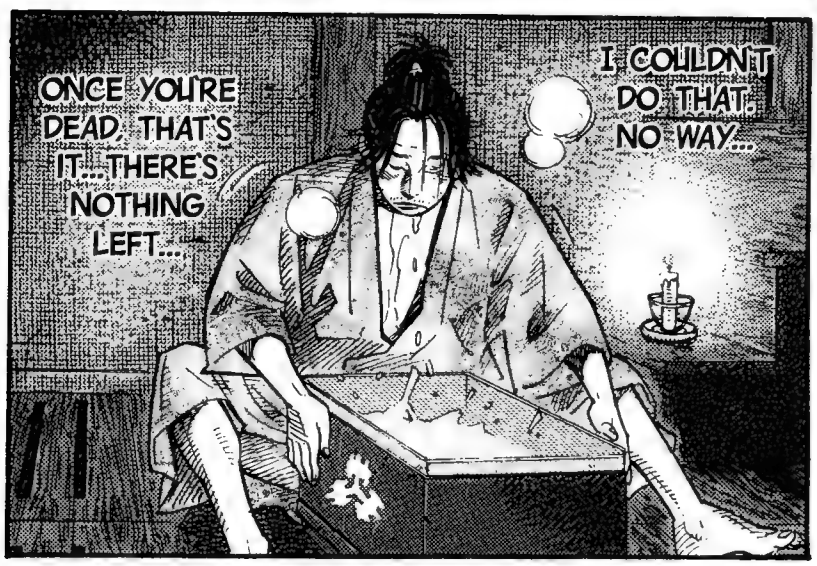

AHH!
DELICIOUS!


SLURP
SHLURP
GLUG
GLUG


AHEM.
URRP!
EXCELLENT!
OH YEAHH!
EXCELLENT SAKE!
I'LL DRINK EVERY LAST DROP!
THE YOSHIOKA WILL BE SO DIS-APPOINTED...
HA HA HA!
...
FSSH
PHEW...
FWOM
THAT SAMURAI WAS REALLY STRONG...
HE KILLED *FIVE* OF THE YOSHIOKA DISCIPLES.


THERE'S NO WAY HE COULD'VE BEATEN DENSHICHIRŌ.
BUT HE'S PROBABLY DEAD NOW.

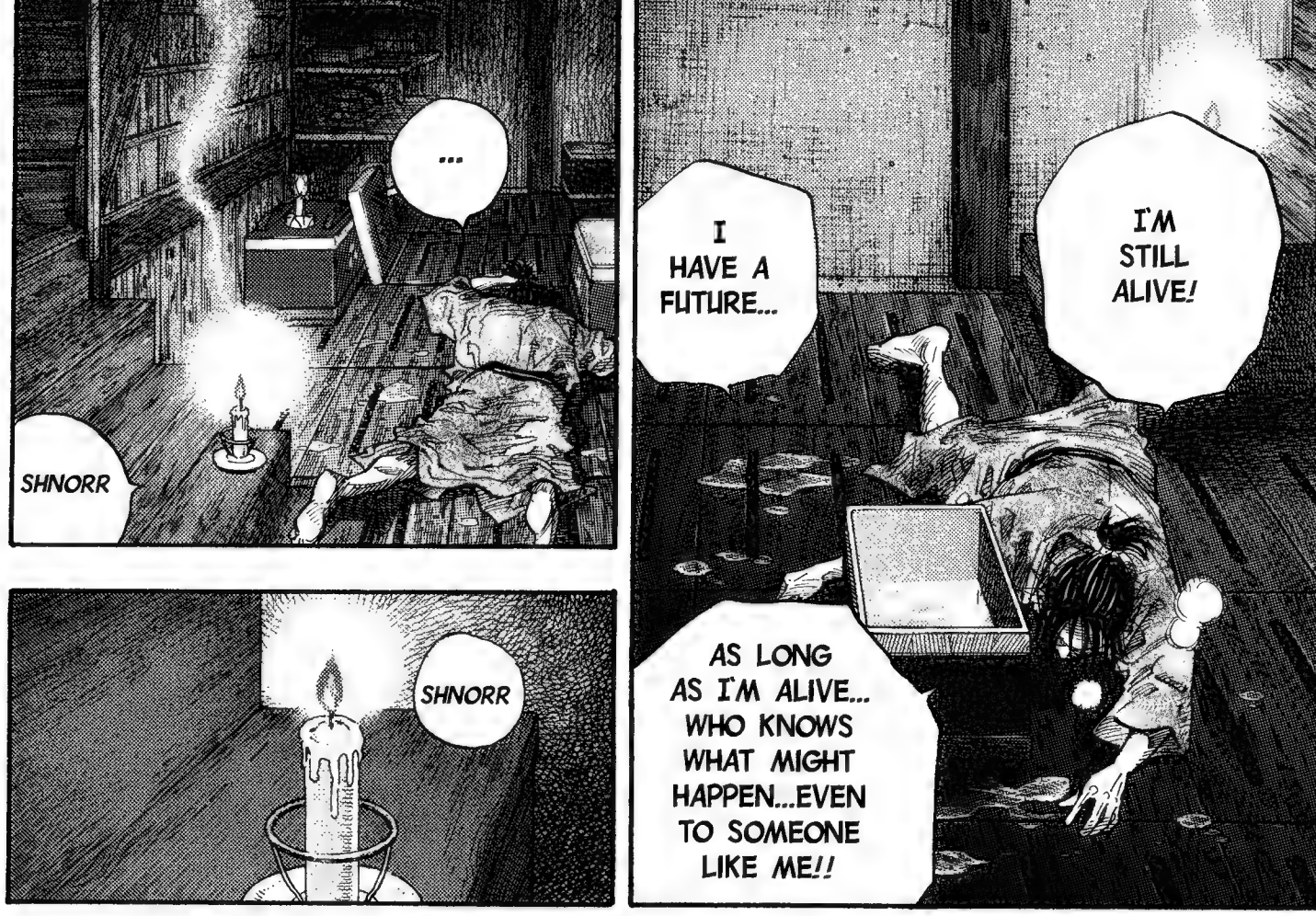

GLUG
GLUG
GLUG
...

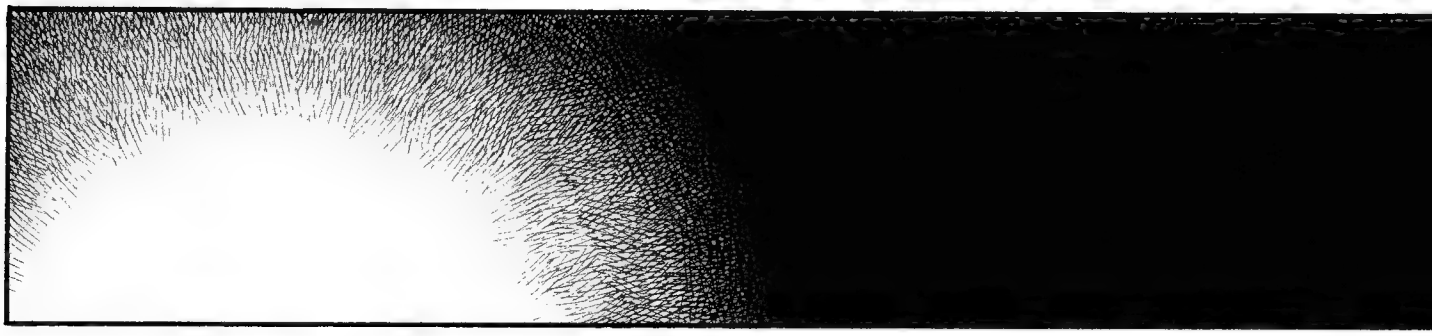

ONCE YOU'RE DEAD, THAT'S IT...THERE'S NOTHING LEFT...
I COULDN'T DO THAT. NO WAY...


I JUST COULDN'T DO THAT...


VERY HONORABLE.
...AN HONORABLE WAY FOR A SWORDSMAN TO GO.
I ADMIRE YOUR COURAGE.


FWISH
!!
KOFF
HAK!
KOFF
HUF
HUF
HUF
WHO CARES ABOUT HONOR?
YOU DIE AND THAT'S IT.
I'M NOT GONNA DIE...
I'M HON'IDEN MATAHACHI!!
I'M NOT GONNA DIE...
I'M SHINMEN TAKEZO!!

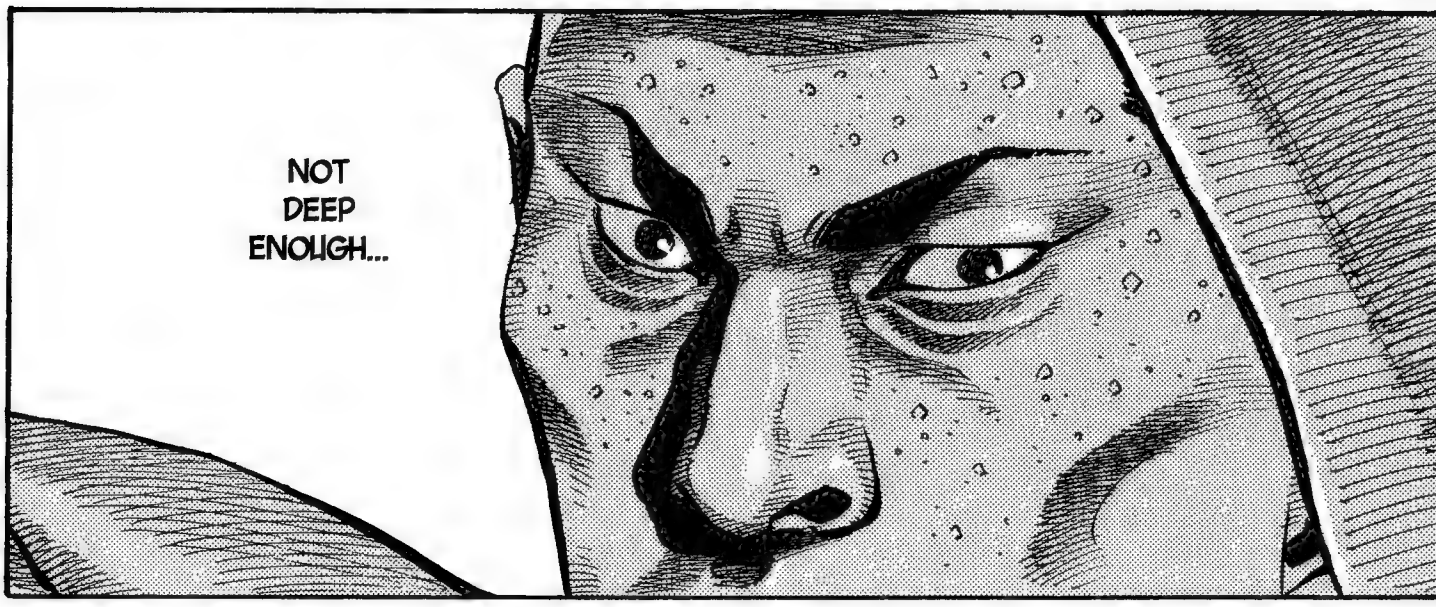

...
SHNORR
I HAVE A FUTURE...
I'M STILL ALIVE!
SHNORR
AS LONG AS I'M ALIVE... WHO KNOWS WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN...EVEN TO SOMEONE LIKE ME!!






NNGH.
THMP
THMP
THMP
THMP
FWOM
THMP
THMP
THMP
THMP
NNGH.
THMP
THMP
HUF
HUF
HUF


THMP
THMP
YOU BASTARD...!!
THMP
THMP
THMP
THMP


NOT DEEP ENOUGH...


BUT HE'S STILL ABLE TO TRADE BLOWS WITH DENSHICHIRŌ'S *HITOSU NO TACHI* TECHNIQUE.
HIS FORM MIGHT NOT BE PERFECT...
HE MOVED BACK IN THE NICK OF TIME... OTHERWISE HE'D BE DEAD!!


"WHEN I WAS A KID, MY FATHER SHINMEN MUNISAI WHIPPED ME INTO SHAPE."
THIS MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...
HE HAS CONSIDERABLE LIFE OR DEATH COMBAT EXPERIENCE...


MIYAMOTO MUSASHI ALSO MUST HAVE GROWN UP WITH A FORMIDABLE OPPONENT.


AND THAT MAN WAS...


DENSHICHIRO, YOU DID GROW UP WITH A POWERFUL OPPONENT...
BUT YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE...


SHINMEN MUNISAI...
...THE ONLY MAN TO EVER DEFEAT MASTER KEMPŌ, THE FOUNDER OF OUR SCHOOL.


SENSEI!
FINISH HIM OFF!!
...
BUT HE'S NOT DOWN YET...
ONE MORE BLOW AND HE'S FINISHED.
HE'S POWERLESS NOW.

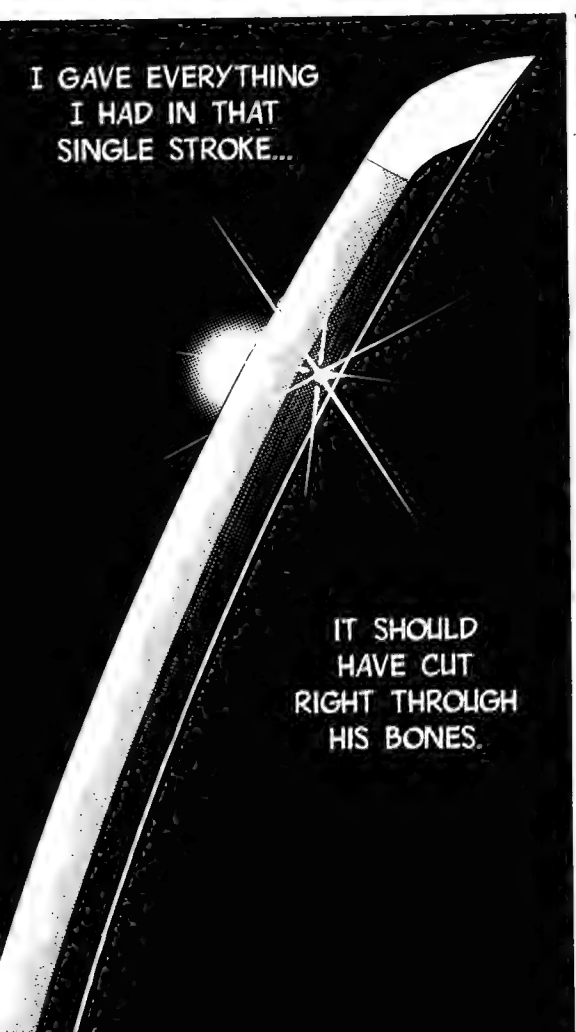

SENSEI!
THMP THMP
HUF
THMP THMP
THMP THMP
HUF
HUF
THMP THMP


AND HE WILL SACRIFICE HIMSELF IN ORDER TO TAKE DOWN HIS OPPONENT.


DON'T YOU GET IT?


MIYAMOTO'S GOING TO USE WHAT LITTLE STRENGTH HE HAS FOR ONE LAST STROKE.
HE'S A WOUNDED BEAST...

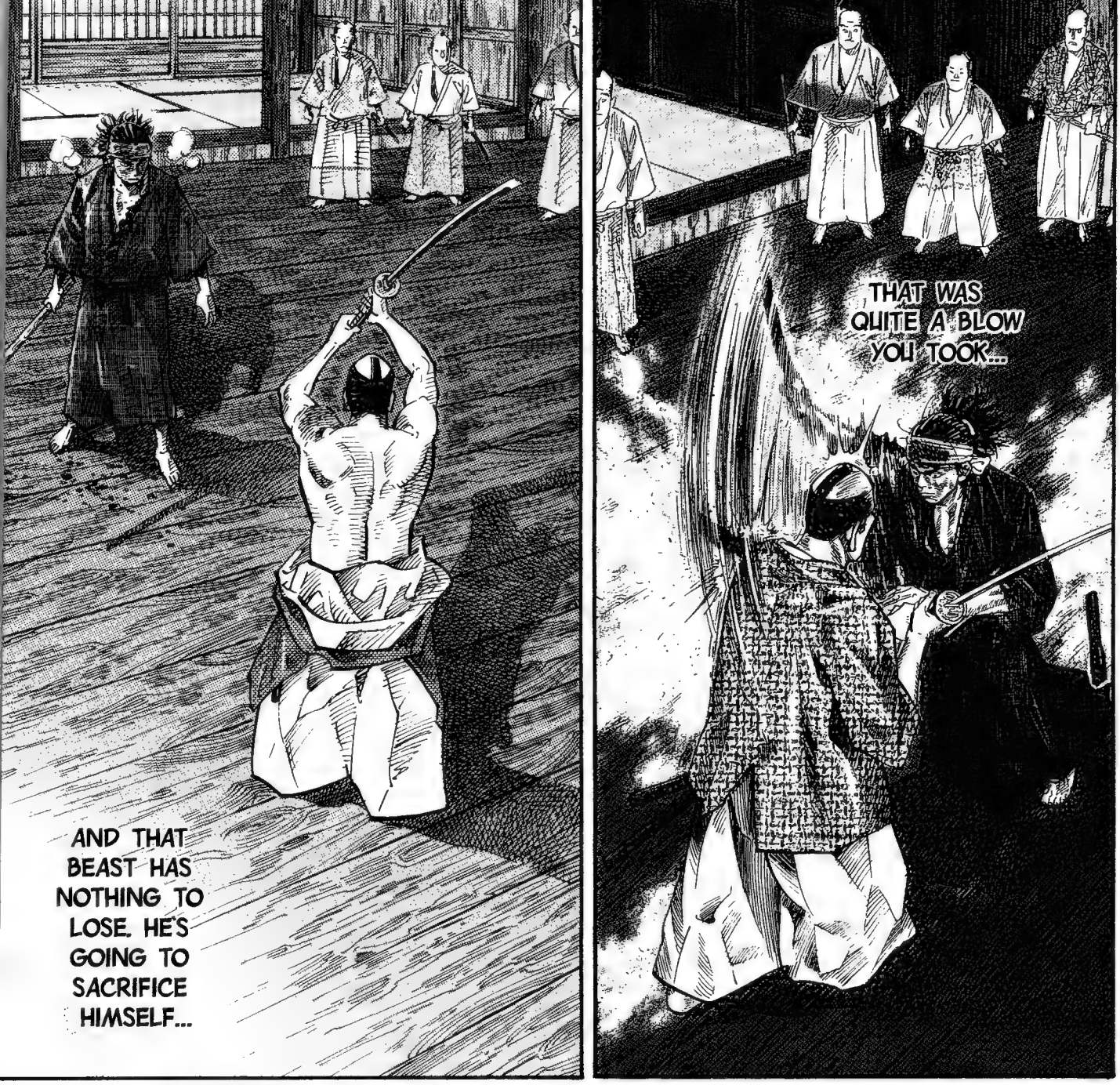

THMP
THMP
THMP
THMP
THMP
THMP
!!


I GAVE EVERYTHING I HAD IN THAT SINGLE STROKE...
IT SHOULD HAVE CUT RIGHT THROUGH HIS BONES.


HUF
HUF


THMP
THMP
THMP
THMP
THMP
IF I DON'T GET HIM WITH THIS ONE STROKE...
...HE'LL DIE FROM MY NEXT ONE.
THAT IS, IF I CAN SOMEHOW...
...IS SAVING HIS STRENGTH FOR ONE FINAL SUICIDE ATTACK.
BUT I FELT NO BONE.
AND NOW MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...


...CONTINUE TO MOVE MY LEFT ARM...
THMP THMP
THMP THMP
THMP THMP
I'M IMPRESSED WITH YOU, DENSHICHIRŌ...
!!
YOU MAINTAIN COMPLETE COMPOSURE ...
...DESPITE THE SERIOUS NATURE OF YOUR INJURY.


AND THAT BEAST HAS NOTHING TO LOSE. HE'S GOING TO SACRIFICE HIMSELF...
THAT WAS QUITE A BLOW YOU TOOK...

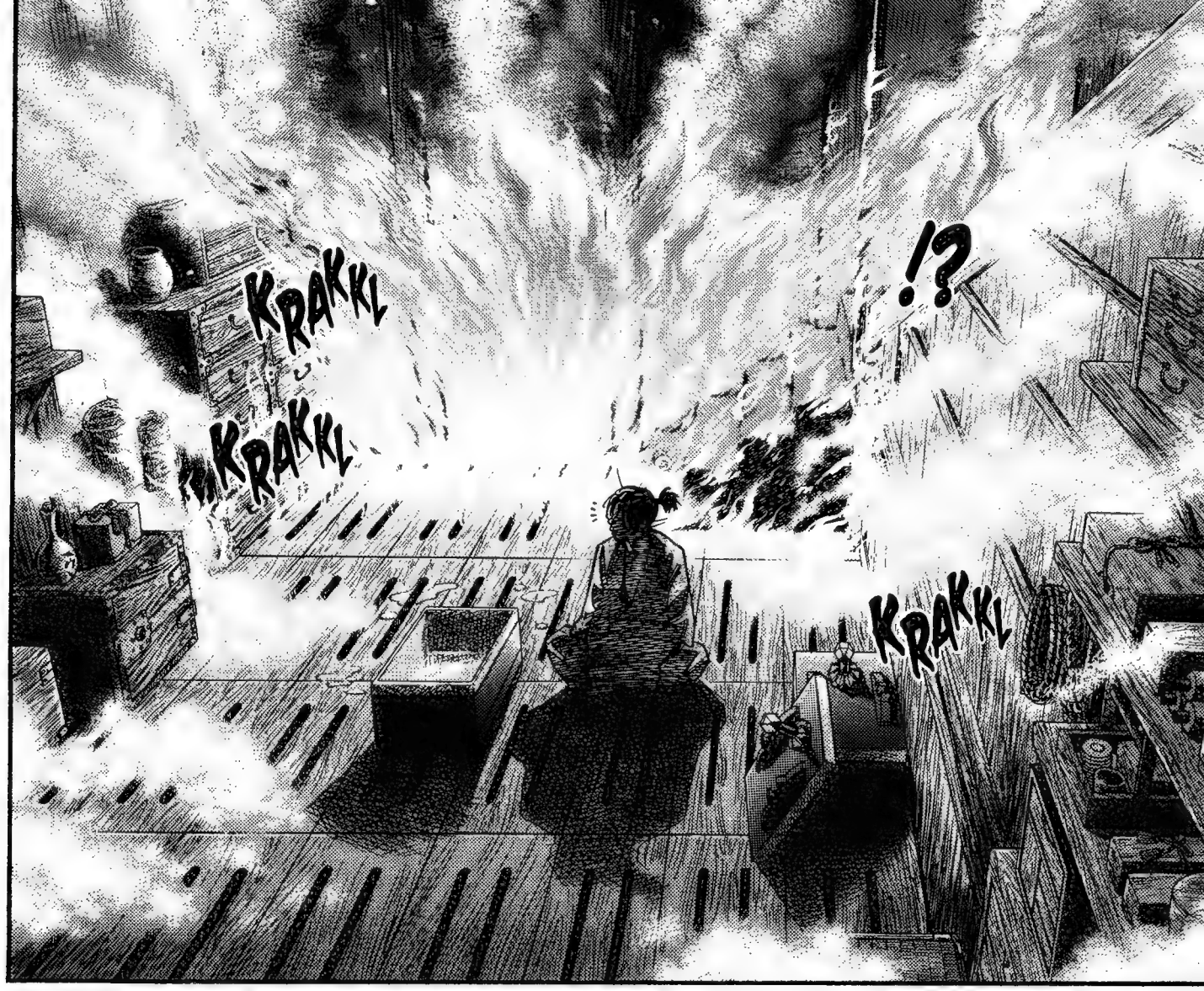

...TO TAKE YOU DOWN.

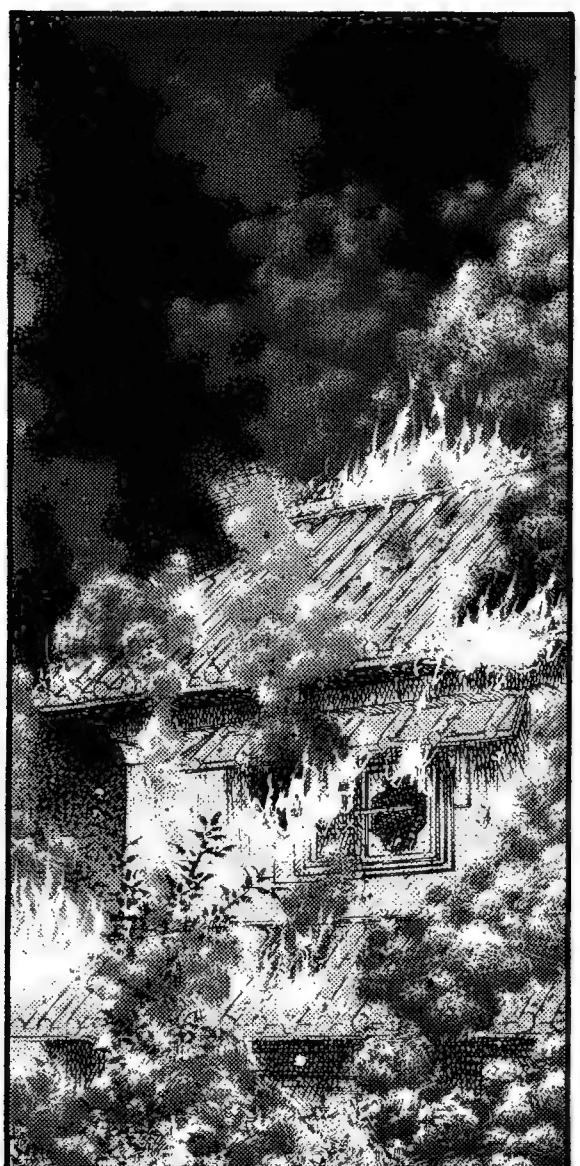

MY FEET WON'T MOVE!!
THMP THMP
AS IF THEY'RE GLUED TO THE FLOOR.
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
THMP THMP
AM I TOO SCARED TO MOVE?
THMP THMP
THMP THMP
MY HANDS, TOO.
IS THIS FEAR?
THMP THMP
HUF
HUF
HUF


THMP
THMP
AM I AFRAID OF DEATH!?
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
THMP
THMP
THMP
THMP
THMP
THMP


HMM...

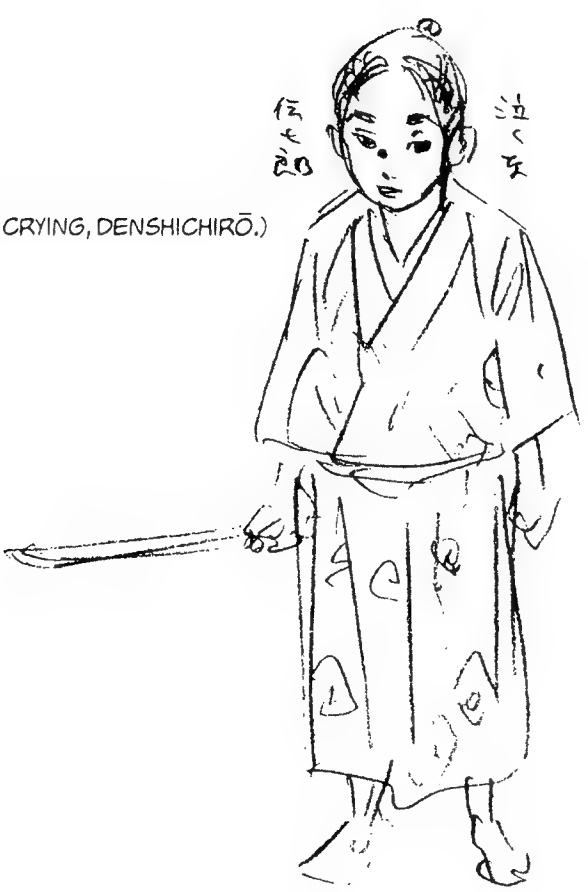

...


KRAKKL
KRAKKL
!?
KRAKKL



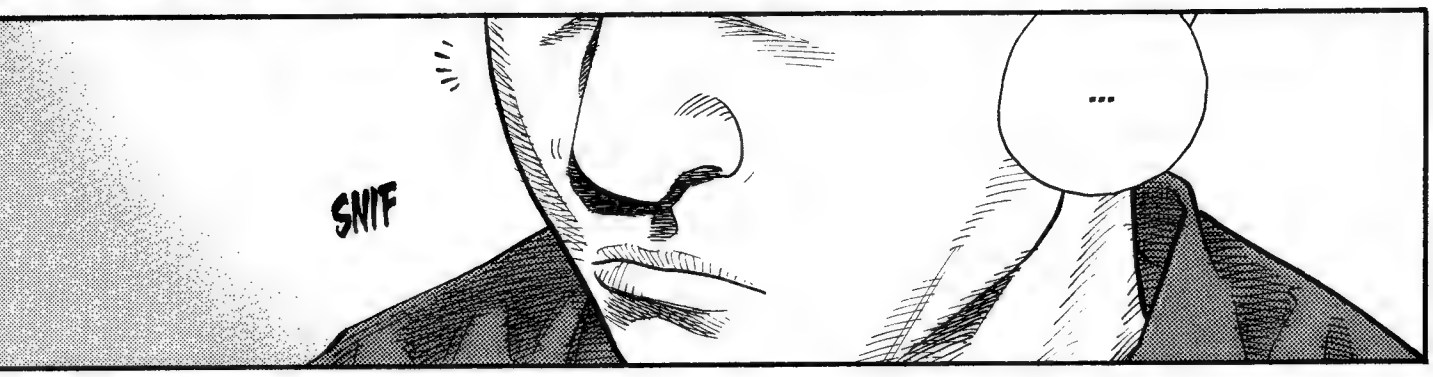

...
WHAT'S GOING ON!?


Vagabond

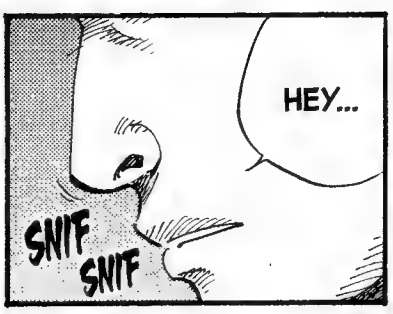


(STOP CRYING, DENSHICHIRŌ.)




SNIF
...




HEY...
SNIF
SNIF




HM...
SNIF



#31 | Inferno

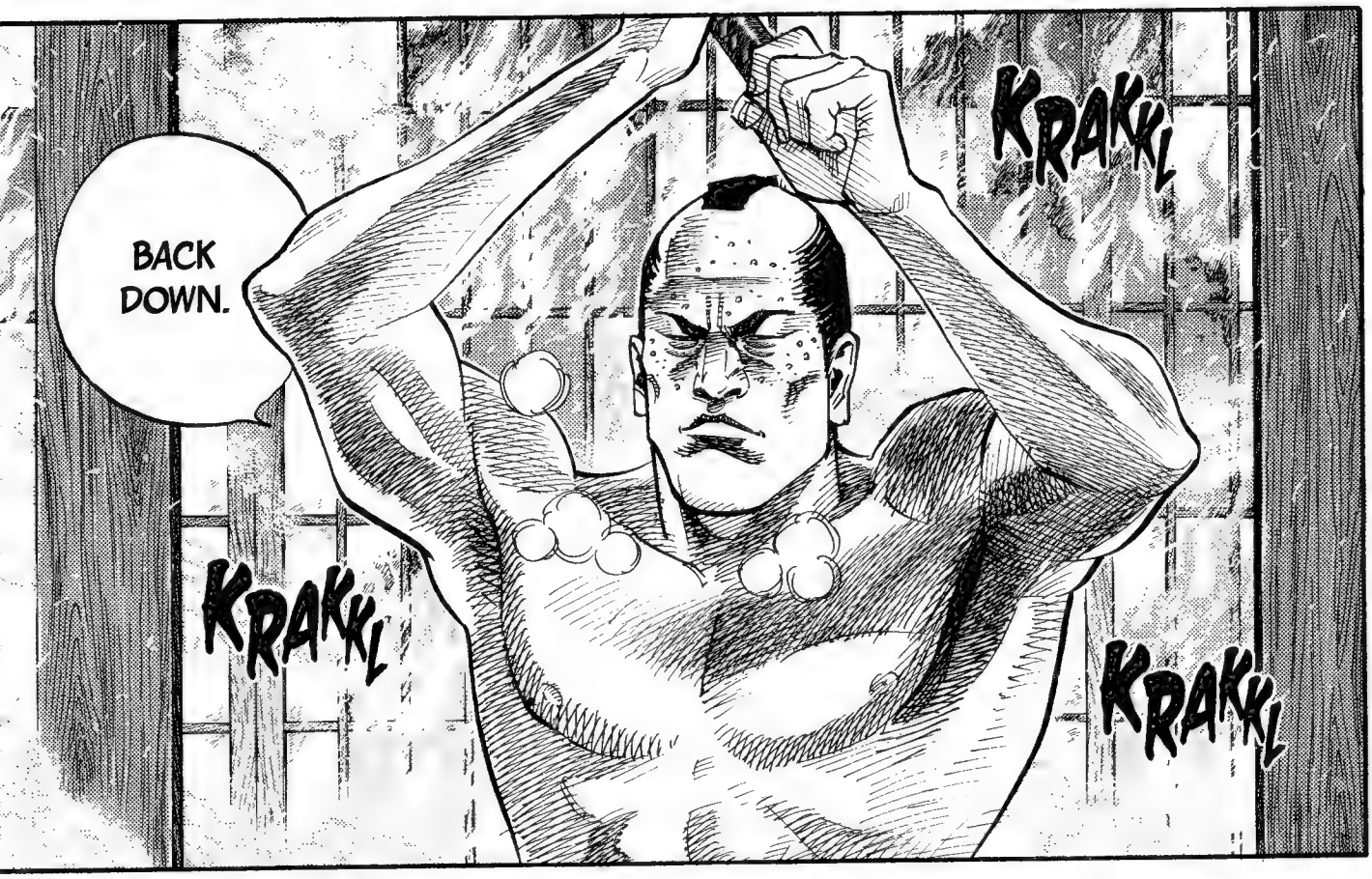

WHAT THE HELL!?
RRRRRRRRR
FIRE!!
PUT IT OUT!!

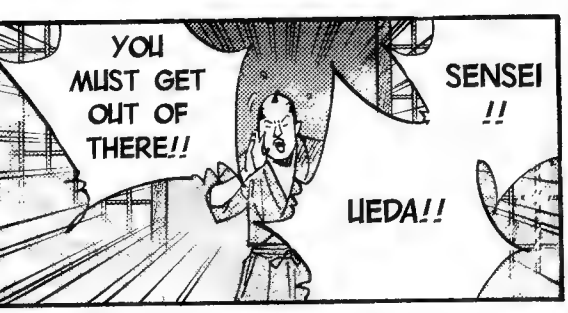

...!!
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
...!!
HUF
HUF
HUF
...
HUH!?
I JUST SAW SOMEONE!!
HE LEAPT OVER THE WALL!!
WHAT!?
...


I HAVE TO ESCAPE!
HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE.
HUF
GASP
HUF
THEY'LL KILL ME!!
WAKASHIMA AND KAII, GO CHECK THE PREMISES!!
YES SIR!!
THE REST OF YOU PUT OUT THE FIRE!
NIIGASA, TAKE THREE OF OUR MEN AND GO AFTER THAT MAN!!
Y-YES SIR!!


IS THIS PART OF YOUR PLAN?
...
URK
...
I APOLOGIZE. I DIDN'T MEAN TO--


FSSH
DAMN IT!!
PUT IT OUT!!
PUT IT OUT!!


BACK DOWN.
KRAKKL
KRAKKL
KRAKKL


YOU MUST GET OUT OF THERE!!
SENSEI !!
UEDA!!


THMP THMP
MIYA-MOTO...


THMP THMP
WE'RE NOT FINISHED YET.
WE EACH HAVE ONE MORE BLOW...
THMP THMP


PLIP

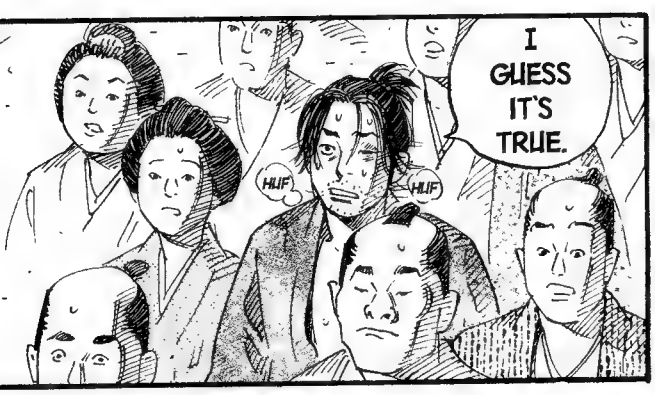

HANG ON TO THAT LIFE OF YOURS...


...BECAUSE...
...I WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN WHEN YOU'RE STRONGER.

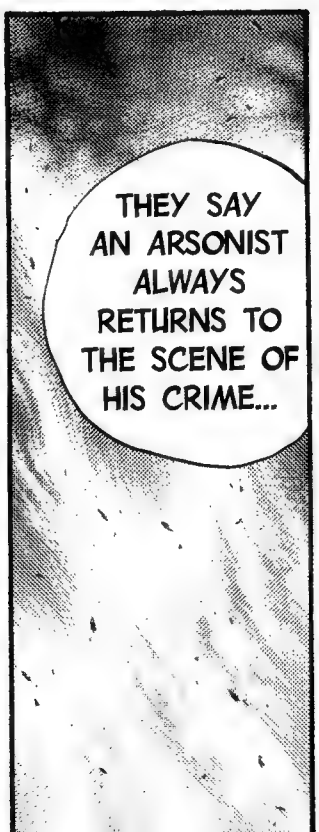

THMP
THMP
SO...
...YOU'RE GIVING ME ANOTHER CHANCE...
THMP
THMP
YOU'RE GIVING ME TIME?
THMP
THMP
TIME IS EQUAL TO ALL...
...FOR ME AS WELL.


EVENTUALLY...
I VOW TO KILL YOU...
STAY ALIVE UNTIL THEN.


RRRRRRR
ARRGH! IT'S NO GOOD!!
THE FIRE'S OUT OF CONTROL!!
GASP
THIS IS TERRIBLE...!!


I GUESS IT'S TRUE.
HUF
HUF


DAMN IT!!
THERE'S NO WAY WE'LL FIND HIM!!
DAMN!! WHERE IS HE!?


THEY SAY AN ARSONIST ALWAYS RETURNS TO THE SCENE OF HIS CRIME...


WHAT A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT.
THE LEGENDARY YOSHIOKA SCHOOL IS BURNING DOWN.
SHUT UP! YOU WANNA GET KILLED?




IT'S HIM.
HE'S STILL ALIVE...!!
WHO'S THAT!?
HE'S ALL CUT UP.
GASP


HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
YOSHIOKA DENSHICHIRŌ ...
YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ...


YOSHIOKA DENSHICHIRŌ!!
YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ!!


AARRRGH!
THEY'RE SO STRONG!


GULPP
WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT?
TAKEZŌ!?
ARRRGH!
NO!
I'M STRONGER.


TAKEZŌ!?
IT CAN'T BE...
WAS THAT HIM!?
NNGH!
HEY!!
TAKEZŌ!!


WHAT'S GOING ON?
A FIGHT.
IT'S A FIGHT!!
YOU BASTARD!!
WHUD
NNGH!
WHUD
FIRST A FIRE AND NOW A FIGHT!!
YEAH! GET HIM!!
STOMP
BASH
STOMP
YOU'RE STILL ALIVE!?
WAS THAT YOU, TAKEZŌ!?


TAKEZŌ!!
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF


HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF



End of volume 3

SCANNED BY :

. DEMETTER

. SUPERJOE

EDITED BY :

. PHANTOM GREYFIRE

HOSTED ON :

COLORED MANGA.COM



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Glossary and Background Information

A note on names: The names presented within the context of this manga are presented in the traditional Japanese order—surname followed by first name. "Miyamoto" is Miyamoto Musashi's last name and "Musashi" is his first name. The name of the creator of *Vagabond*, however, has been presented first name followed by last name. "Takehiko" is the author's first name and "Inoue" is his last.

A Brief Historical Overview

The *Sengoku* (warring states) period (1482-1558) in Japan was a time of chaos and conflict. Central authorities, in the form of the imperial court and the shogunate, had grown increasingly weak, and the land was effectively ruled autonomously by numerous *daimyō* (domain lords). Looking to expand their spheres of control, the *daimyō* were constantly at war with each other. One *daimyō* in particular, Oda Nobunaga, set out on a mission to unify Japan by means of conquest. Incredibly successful, he managed to control approximately one-third of Japan by the time of his assassination in 1582. One of Nobunaga's chief generals, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, became Nobunaga's successor to carry on the quest for unification. Through a process of conquest and conciliation, Hideyoshi succeeded in creating a federation amongst the *daimyō*, and by 1590 order was restored to Japan under Hideyoshi's rule. Hideyoshi's death in 1598, however, presented the question of succession. Most of the *daimyō* from the domains in the west remained loyal to the Toyotomi Clan and its five-year-old heir, Toyotomi Hideyori. Tokugawa Ieyasu, however, leading the major *daimyō* from central and eastern Japan, challenged the Toyotomi clan's leadership. The two sides clashed at the Battle of Sekigahara (1600) in Mino (located in present-day Gifu Prefecture), where the Tokugawa claimed an overwhelming victory. From that point on, the Tokugawa clan would effectively rule Japan for the next 250 years. The political stability that resulted put mass numbers of samurai out of work. Masterless samurai, known as *rōnin*, were forced to wander the land to seek out employment. This, the beginning of the Edo period (1600-1868), set the stage for many of the period dramas and *chambara* sword-fighting films that have popularized the image of the samurai to a Western audience.

Ikeda Terumasa (1564-1613)

One of the great *daimyō* of the Sengoku period, Ikeda sided with the Tokugawa at the Battle of Sekigahara, and was subsequently awarded Himeji Castle and the Harima domain (located in modern-day Hyogo Prefecture).

Sakushū
Sakushū, also known as Mimasaka, is the historical name for the area that makes up the northern part of modern-day Okayama Prefecture.

Takuan Sōhō (1573-1645)
A monk of the Rinzai sect of Zen Buddhism. By the time Takuan was 37, he was appointed abbot of Daitokuji, the leading temple of the Rinzai sect. Takuan was an important figure whose acute and brutally honest advice was sought by influential and powerful figures such as Emperor Go Mizuno and the shōgun Tokugawa Iemitsu. His correspondence to Yagyū Munenori discussing Zen and swordsmanship, entitled *The Unfettered Mind,* has become an influential treatise in both the areas of philosophy and martial arts. The pickled daikon radish, takuan, also bears his name.

Ukita Hideie (1573-1655)
Daimyō of Bizen and Mimasaka. Ukita Hideie was one of the leading generals who fought for the Toyotomi Clan at the Battle of Sekigahara.

The Yagyū Clan
Yagyū Muneyoshi Sekishūsai (1527-1606) was the founder of the famed Yagyū-Shinkage school of sword fighting. His son Yagyū Munenori (1571-1646) was one of Tokugawa's key generals at the Battle of Sekigahara. Munenori was appointed as the official fencing instructor of the Tokugawa Clan, and in 1632 the Yagyū were appointed as the *ometsuke*—responsible for the surveillance of the daimyō. Although the Yagyū Clan has been depicted in Kazuo Koike's *Lone Wolf and Cub* as the plotters of the downfall of Ittō Ogami, the general Japanese popular culture take on the Yagyū Clan is more positive. More specifically, Munenori's son, Yagyū Jūbei (1607-1650), is viewed as a wandering hero protecting the people from evildoers.

Yoshioka Kempō (dates unknown)
A distinguished warrior during the *Sengoku* period (1482-1558) and the founder of the renowned Yoshioka school of sword fighting. Yoshioka Kempō mastered the Kyōhachi style of swordmanship and then modified it to form the Yoshioka style. In the context of Inoue's *Vagabond*, as well as in Eiji Yoshikawa's *Musashi*, Yoshioka Seijūrō and Denshichirō are Kempō's sons, who are historically thought to have dueled with Miyamoto Musashi on numerous occasions.

Character Concept Sketches











Vagabond in New York

In November 2007, Books Kinokuniya celebrated the grand opening of a new flagship store facing Bryant Park in Manhattan. As part of the festivities, Takehiko Inoue spent three days painting several murals directly on the walls of the new store. On the final day, in front of a crowd of spectators, Inoue Sensei applied the finishing touches to the striking eight-foot-tall images of Musashi and Kojirō. VIZ Media took this opportunity to have a few words with the master manga artist.



VIZ: Having drawn your first mural, do you feel like you've discovered anything new?
INOUE: I usually work at my desk when creating manga. By comparison, I found that coming all the way to New York to draw on a wall in front of people was rather relaxing. It reminded me of why I enjoy drawing so much.

VIZ: What was the most difficult thing about this project?
INOUE: It was difficult for me to maintain the balance and proportions of the characters. I had to keep stepping back to see how things were coming.

VIZ: How did you feel about painting in front of American fans as performance?
INOUE: Once I became focused, it didn't matter whether or not an audience was watching me. But occasionally I would turn around and think, "Wow, a lot of people are here!"

VIZ: When did you decide on the ideas and designs for the murals?
INOUE: I came to the store about a month beforehand and decided I would paint Musashi's face and Otsū peeking around the corner of the staircase. Everything else I decided on the spot.

VIZ: Do you find it important to make design and concept decisions on the spot?
INOUE: Yes, I had to see the wall to be able to make those decisions. For example, when I decided to draw Kojirō next to Musashi, I wanted the background to be a beach scene. However, I felt that the store's atmosphere didn't really match that kind of image, so I decided to paint Kojirō in a field instead.

VIZ: What's your ratio of planning vs. creativity in production?
INOUE: Planning 9: Creativity 1.

VIZ: *Real* will be released in America in 2008. What made you decide to write a manga about wheelchair basketball?
INOUE: My first encounter with wheelchair basketball was on TV. I thought it might be interesting to write a manga about the sport.





VIZ: What aspects of *Real* do you want American audiences to pay attention to?
INOUE: Even though we're talking about manga, I try to avoid unrealistic themes. It's like developing pathos around the main character in a movie or a novel. I want readers to believe that these things could happen to people in real life.



VIZ: What would you like American readers to pay attention to while reading *Slam Dunk*?
INOUE: Of course, the outcomes of the games are an interesting part of the series, but I also want people to feel the joy of accomplishing something after working really hard at it, or to experience that exact moment when you realize that you love a certain sport. I want people to really feel these emotions that are the kind of feelings that we all have in common.

VIZ: So these emotions are universal, and not bound by ethnicity or by country?
INOUE: That's right. The reasons why people play sports are always the same.

VIZ: Comedy is a strong element in the early stages of *Slam Dunk*. However, toward the middle to the end of the series, the story becomes more dramatic. Was that an intentional choice?
INOUE: In the beginning, the goal of that series was to keep from getting cancelled by the magazine. Because basketball was not very popular in Japan back then, I included many elements such as comedy to make it more appealing to a wider audience.

VIZ: Many years have passed since you first started creating manga. Have you or your view of manga changed over the years?
INOUE: Yes, I have changed, especially my perspective. I wrote *Slam Dunk* when I was in my twenties, and I was focused on success and being the best. Now I believe that even if you face hardships or failure, there is meaning in that because you can still continue on from there. Even if you lose, it's not over. I feel that both in my work and in my life, I've become more open to going in different directions.



VIZ: What is manga to you?
INOUE: My arms and legs. It's a very natural way for me to express myself.

VIZ: When you go back to Japan, what will you tell people about this event?
INOUE: Thanks to this event, I feel like a burden has been lifted off my shoulders. I can start work again feeling refreshed.

VIZ: Thank you so much for your time.

Interview conducted by Misaki Kido

Author Comments

The following comments came from the dust jacket flaps of the Japanese graphic novel releases. They appear here translated into English for the first time for this VIZBIG Edition.

Volume 1
Feeling the bitter disappointment of defeat is the only way you can shed tears of joy for a victory. In a similar vein, perhaps you can only really know what life is all about if you've had a near-death experience. Happiness is being able to be grateful for whatever it is you have at the moment. It sounds simple, but it's very difficult. And at the same time, it may seem complex, but it's really very simple.

Volume 2
I use a G-pen to do the illustrations for *Vagabond*, and it's been a while since I've used one. For two years prior to *Vagabond* I'd been using brushes, Sign Pens, markers, and pencils. You need to apply some degree of pressure with a G-pen, so my hand gets tired, but it feels good. Like I've returned to my true calling.

Volume 3
"Informational manga" seems to be popular. You can learn about business, how to cook, find out about economics, learn how to gamble—the list goes on. I suppose it's popular because it's a casual way to gain information and knowledge, yet it still has all the elements of entertainment. But let me set the record straight here—you won't get anything like that out of *this* manga. It's just for entertainment.

Vagabond

Volume 1

VIZBIG Edition

Story & Art by

Takehiko Inoue

Based on Eiji Yoshikawa's *Musashi*

English Adaptation/Yuji Oniki
Touch-up & Lettering/Steve Dutro
VIZ Signature Series Design/Izumi Evers
VIZBIG Edition Design/Yukiko Kamematsu Whitley
Editor/Andy Nakatani

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VIZBIG EDITION

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RATED M FOR MATURE

PARENTAL ADVISORY
VAGABOND is rated M for Mature and is recommended for mature readers. This volume contains graphic violence and sexually explicit situations.
ratings.viz.com

Winner of the 2000 Media Arts Festival Award
Recipient of the 2000 Kodansha Award for Best Manga
Winner of the 2002 Tezuka Osamu Culture Award
Nominated for a 2003 Eisner Award for Best Writer/Artist

Praise for Takehiko Inoue

"Only an artist like Takehiko Inoue could take Japan's most historic samurai and bring him to life for Japanese and American audiences alike. In his hands, manga is fine art for everyone, Miyamoto Musashi is both human and hero, and *Vagabond* is flawless artistic storytelling."
—Kai-Ming Cha, *Publishers Weekly*

"This reads like an Akira Kurosawa film captured on the printed page. Takehiko Inoue's fine line art, much more detailed than the norm for Japanese manga, is a real treat, while the storyline captivates."
—Cliff Biggers, *Comic Buyer's Guide*

"More than just flesh-splitting battle scenes and mandala-like sequences of spiritual introspection, *Vagabond* seems to contain the entire world and span the entire human condition."
—Jason Thompson, *Manga: The Complete Guide*

"An exquisitely rendered masterwork. The blood and sweat of feudal Japan have never felt as real as in Inoue's intricate linework. In a class well above nearly every other manga series on the market."
—Justin Sevakis, Anime News Network

"Inoue makes the carnage look like pure poetry in motion. *Vagabond* is more than bloody duels; it's also a meditation on the samurai spirit, and what it means to risk your life for your honor."
—Deb Aoki, About.com

"What makes *Vagabond* stand out, and makes this something more than just a retelling of Musashi's life, is Inoue's feel for characters, breathing life into figures who lived in a world so long ago and far away."
—Matt Brady, Newsarama



VIZ SIGNATURE



大 VIZBIG EDITION

Vagabond

Takehiko Inoue

VIZ media